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ABSTRACT

This document consists of the 12 issues of "Parent News" (an electronic Internet magazine for parents, prepared for the National Parent Information Network) published during 1996. Each monthly issue contains short feature articles summarizing research, announcing major events and conferences, and addressing issues of interest to parents. Topics of feature articles include children's health; sexuality; choosing a school and school choice; school uniforms; fathering; magnet schools; children's computer and Internet use; creativity; television; self esteem; school size; child care; parental leave; school-to-work transitions; child behavior; parent-school and parent-teacher relationships; college costs; balancing work and family life; family centers; resilience; preventing drug use; and family literacy. Some articles are reprinted with permission from other sources. Also included in each issue are sections that provide information geared to the interests of parents, including: (1) book reviews; (2) World Wide Web and gopher sites; (3) organizations; (4) national organization phone numbers; and (5) a calendar of events. Some issues also contain sections on newsletters (issues 2-12) and on guides, brochures, and fact sheets (issues 11-12) for parents. (DR)

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PARENT NEWS

A Compilation of 1996 Issues

Volume 2, nos. 1-12*

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Parent News is the monthly news magazine of the National Parent Information Network (NPIN), a special project of the ERIC Clearinghouse on Elementary and Early Childhood Education at the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign. Written for parents, this online magazine addresses frequently asked questions from parents and those who work with them.

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Parent News for January 1996

Volume 2, Number 1

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Parent News for January, 1996

RESEARCH REPORT: Family vs. School Perspectives on Family- Centered Early Education

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Family members and school staffs hold different perspectives on the priorities for family-centered early education programs. A recent issue of the journal *Early Child Development and Care* included results of research on this topic conducted by Christine Burton-Maxwell and Dominic F. Gullo of the University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee.

The study participants were family and staff members associated with two different schools in the midwest which served children in pre-k through third grade.

Results indicate agreement among family members and school staffs that a wide range of support be made available to allow for family-school collaboration. However, the staff placed a low priority on involving families in program decision-making, while families placed a high priority on being able to have input into decisions regarding programs available for their children. Staff placed a high priority on parent education programs, while families reported a low interest in receiving this type of assistance.

The researchers suggest that while school staff work towards providing services to the family that enhance the students' experience in school, parents would prefer to see efforts directed towards making a wide array of community social services more accessible through the school.

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Teaching Young Children about Sexuality

The November 95 issue of *The APA Monitor*, a publication of the American Psychological Association, included an article about discussing sex with young children. The article notes that while the emphasis has been on teaching educators and parents how to spot signs of sexual trauma and abuse, little has been done to teach educators and parents how to engage children in healthy, age-appropriate discussions about their sexuality.

To address the need for teacher-knowledge, Lizbeth Gray and Ruth Stiehl at the University of Oregon have developed a course for pre-service teachers. Teachers must create an atmosphere that allows children to ask for and receive meaningful information about their own bodies, rather than recitations of facts. Psychologist Robert Selverstone agrees, and conducts workshops that help teachers recognize the weaknesses in the way they learned about their own sexuality, thereby improving teachers' efforts to provide meaningful information to children. Selverstone notes that children who develop the ability to talk about sexuality in a productive way will continue to do so as they mature into adulthood.

Children as young as three years of age can begin developing healthy attitudes about sexuality by learning the proper names for sex-related body parts, asserts Sandy Wurtele, a psychology professor at the University of Colorado at Colorado Springs. She advocates introducing the proper vocabulary in early childhood classrooms and at home. Parents can help children who are exploring each others' bodies by discussing body parts in a matter-of-fact way as they calmly help the children get dressed, and by introducing children to picture books that explain body parts.

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Choosing a Special Education Facility for Your Child

The National Association of Private Schools for Exceptional Children (NAPSEC) offers the following guidelines for choosing a private special education facility for your child:

Academics:

> Visit the school, noting its atmosphere inside and outside the classroom. Find out how much of the child's day will be spent in the classroom and what courses are available. For high school students, find out about opportunities for vocational training and ask if a degree is granted upon graduation. Periodic parent-staff conferences should be held. Find out how the school will meet the needs identified on the IEP.

School Staff:

> Things to look for include school accreditation, staff qualifications, pupil-staff ratio, opportunity for one-to- one attention, and consistency in school philosophy and staff methods.

Health and Hygiene:

> Find out if health care professionals are easily accessible. Ask about the school's policy on contagious diseases and counseling services available to student. Find out the kind of assistance available to children who need help with feeding, washing or dressing.

Visitation, Vacations, and Community Involvement:

> Find out what the policy is for visiting your child, or taking your child out of school for vacations or weekends. As about opportunities to participate in community programs such as Little League or Boy/Girl Scouts.

Meal Plans:

> Ask to see the school menu. Look for nutritious and balanced meals, note how they are served, and ask who prepares the meals. Find out the school policy on junk food, snacks, and care packages.

Discipline and Supervision:

> Find out about the school's discipline policy and obtain a written copy. Find out how and when children are supervised.

NAPSEC recommends involving your child in the decision-making process as much as possible, so that he or she will feel more comfortable with the placement.

Finally, contact the Department of Children and Family Services, the Child Care Association, United Way, and any other agencies that have information on the facility you are considering.

For more information, contact:

National Association of Private Schools for Exceptional Children

1522 K Street, NW, Suite 1032
Washington, DC 20005
(202) 408-3338

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Administering Adult Medications to Children

The National Organization for Rare Disorders reported in their Winter 1995 newsletter, *Orphan Disease Update*, that adult medications will soon list the appropriate children's doses on the bottle along with the appropriate adult doses.

Parents are aware that many drugs do not list dosages for children under the age of 12, and frequently estimate and administer what they believe to be the appropriate dose for their child. Recognizing this hazard, the FDA has decided to allow drug companies to submit their on-hand data on the use of their drugs in children to the FDA, so the appropriate pediatric dosage can be added to the labels of over-the-counter and prescription drugs.

Prior to this, the FDA had required drug companies to conduct extensive testing on children before including pediatric dosages on medications. In the future, testing of new drugs will include pediatric components so pediatric dosages can be included on drugs when they initially enter the market.

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Free Resources for Home Use

U.S. Department of Education

A pamphlet titled "Read*Write*Now!" can be obtained from the U.S. Department of Education, at no cost to parents, by calling 1-800-USA-LEARN. By calling this number, you can request the "Read*Write*Now!" kit in English or Spanish, at two different grade levels: Pre-K, or for older children, the "6th grade and under" version.

ERIC Clearinghouse on Elementary and Early Childhood Education

Parents and others interested in obtaining free print articles on parenting topics, including health, nutrition, television, video games, and children's social or academic development, can place their request at 1-800-583-4135. Many of these articles are also included on the National Parent Information Network.

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Book Reviews

Stautberg, Susan Schiffer. 1993. *The Pregnancy & Motherhood Diary: Planning the First Year of Your Second Career.* Revised and Updated. ISBN: 0-942361-81-4. Available From: MasterMedia Limited, 17 East 89th Street, Suite 7D, New York, NY 10128 ($12.95; $2 postage and handling for the first copy; $1 for each additional copy). ED381233; 290p.

Intended for women who plan to combine a career with motherhood, this book is a planning document for the full-time working mother-to-be during the three trimesters of pregnancy and the first trimester of motherhood. Each section discusses physical and mental changes associated with motherhood and includes a calendar for appointments and events during the trimester. In addition, the first section (weeks 1 to 12) suggests that the mother-to-be should start planning for child care, considering child care options, and thinking about potential on-the-job hazards. The second section (weeks 13 to 24) provides information on dealing with colleagues at work during pregnancy, and beginning to think about the baby's needs. Section 3 (weeks 25 to 40) discusses choosing a pediatrician, fathering, and other issues. Section 4 (weeks 41 to 52) discusses adjusting to motherhood, the "perfect-parent" syndrome, and the importance of reviewing child care arrangements. The last section deals with challenges related to parenting faced by working women: family-friendly work environments, parenting parents, corporate life and the advantages offered by medium-sized and smaller companies, and goal-setting strategies for work and home. Twenty-seven appendices include various charts, checklists, and reference information for pregnant women and new mothers, including lists of questions to consider when choosing day care and child caregivers, and lists of parent and child care support groups.

Morton-Young, Tommie. 1995. *After-School and Parent Education Programs for At-Risk Youth and Their Families: A Guide to Organizing and Operating a Community-Based Center for Basic Educational Skills Reinforcement, Homework Assistance, Cultural Enrichment, and a Parent Involvement Focus.* ISBN: 0-398-05961-6 (cloth); 0-398-05962-4 (paper). Available From: Charles C. Thomas, Publisher, 2600 South First Street, Springfield, IL 62794-9265. ED381248; 136p.

Intended for use by community organizers, parent-child advocates, parents, teacher education programs, and field experience classes, this book discusses after-school programs designed to assist students in completing homework, aid youth in acquiring basic educational and social skills, and help their parents become more effective agents in their children's schooling experiences. The book is divided into four parts. An introduction discusses changes in American society, the needs of at-risk children, and characteristics of after school programs. Part 1, "Getting Started," discusses organizing an after-school program, advisory councils, goals, cooperative efforts, publicity, fundraising, human resources, staff recruitment and training, and physical and material resources. Part 2, "The After-School Program Plan," describes the blueprint needed by an after-school program; setting up contents of the program to supplement the regular curriculum; ways the program can go beyond school subjects to teach character, values, and morality; and tutors and testing. Part 3, "The Parent Focus," contains information on working with parents, level of parent participation, and information on parent educationprograms. Part 4 consists of a directory of resources thatincludes contact information for publishers, producers oflearning materials, periodicals and miscellaneous programs, andother resources, including government agencies and professional associations.

Hart, Louise. 1993. *The Winning Family: Increasing Self-Esteem in Your Children and Yourself.* ISBN: 0-89087-689-4. Available From: Celestial Arts, P.O. Box 7123, Berkeley, CA 94707 ($12.95). ED380711; 264p.

This book focuses on the personal development of parents and children. It gives ideas on how to increase family members' self esteem by teaching them to value themselves. The book's open format allows readers to use it in any way they choose. Offered here are numerous suggestions for understanding family dynamics, along with a myriad of techniques on changing unhealthy exchanges into positive interactions. Discussed in the book's 26 chapters are leadership styles, parental characteristics, beliefs, avoidance behaviors, bonding, child abuse, communication, criticism, the danger of competition, discipline, divorce, expectations, extended families, empowerment, faulty thinking, self-esteem builders, feelings, forgiveness, grandparents, guidance, guilt, labeling children, listening skills, locus-of-control, love, mistakes, negative behavior, responses to behavior, perfectionism, play, problem solving, relationships, reparenting yourself, systems of reward and punishment, self-awareness, self-defeating behavior, self-esteem, self-talk, shame, television viewing, touching, trust, characteristics of winning families, and the power of words. Included are lists of parenting resources, recommended readings, and an index.

Nunez, Ralph da Costa. 1994. *Hopes, Dreams & Promise: The Future of Homeless Children in America.* New York: Homes for the Homeless, Inc. (Sponsoring Agency: Chemical Bank, New York, NY. Health Care and Education Finance Group.) Available From: Homes for the Homeless, Inc., 36 Cooper Square, 6th Floor, New York, NY 10003 ($15.95). ED380706; 252p.

This book explores in six chapters the issues behind family homelessness in America and presents some solutions to this increasing problem. Chapter 1 analyzes some of the causes for homelessness with a look at the 1980s, cuts in social programs, the insufficient help provided by federal authorities, and efforts of local initiatives. In chapter 2, a model program, the Residential Educational Training (RET) program, is presented as a response to the inadequate remedy traditional shelters have offered. Chapter 3 focuses on ways to break the cycle of homelessness by educating the children and discusses both the effects of homelessness on education and ways to initiate different programs in early childhood education, accelerated education, and other strategies. Chapter 4 continues this emphasis on education by supplying ways that parents can increase their education through adult education centers, employment training, and other methods. Keeping families together and healthy with prevention programs is the focus of chapter 5; preventive health care, crisis nursery programs, and other innovative approaches are examined. The final chapter addresses ways to help families find a permanent home. Appendices elaborate study methodologies, homeless family rights litigation in New York City, and RET center funding mechanisms.

Alvy, Kerby T. 1994. *Parent Training Today: A Social Necessity.* Center for the Improvement of Child Caring, Inc., Studio City, Calif. ISBN: 1-884984-06-1. Available From: Center for the Improvement of Child Caring, 11331 Ventura Boulevard, Suite 103, Studio City, California 91604-3247. ED380518; 401p.

The role that contemporary parent training programs play in solving problems caused by breakdowns in the family unit and parent-child relationships is clarified. Guidelines are offered to help various segments of society provide parent training. Part 1 explains why parent training is needed and highlights modern parent training programs. Part 2 provides background information on what parent training can achieve. Part 3 examines what effective and humane parenting means today and considers research in this area. Part 4 examines programs that have been created to foster effective parenting, focusing on Parent Effectiveness Training, Systematic Training for Effective Parenting (STEP), and Confident Parenting. Culturally adapted parent training programs, including those for minority parents, are reviewed. Part 5 explores studies of such programs in operation. Part 6 summarizes findings and presents a blueprint for action involving all segments of society. Twenty-two tables illustrate programs and their impact.

Sullo, Robert A. 1993. *Teach Them to Be Happy.* Revised Edition. ISBN: 0-944337-17-1. Available From: New View Publications, P.O. Box 3021, Chapel Hill, NC 27515-3021

($11). ED379574; 159p.

This book is for professional educators, parents, and other adults who wish to teach young children (3 years old through third grade) ways to enjoy greater happiness. Its ideas come from control theory (the idea that all behavior is internally motivated) and reality therapy (the application of control theory principles). In contrast to stimulus-response theory, which suggests that humans react primarily to external stimuli, control theory asserts that people choose behaviors that will help them satisfy their basic, inner needs. The book is presented in two parts. Part one is largely theoretical and explains the use of control theory and reality therapy with young children. Part two switches from theory to praxis and presents, in eight chapters, hands-on strategies for implementing the book's ideas. Each chapter begins with an explanation of a basic concept, such as basic needs, signals, and pictures, and is followed by a series of activities that the adult and child work through together to teach the chapter's concept. Activities for a balanced classroom are offered, as well as suggestions for further reading. It is hoped that these activities will help children learn how to meet their needs in responsible, balanced ways.

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NETWorking: Other Gopher and WWW Sites to Visit

Name: Exploratorium

Sponsor: Palace of Fine Arts, San Francisco, California

Description:

A museum of science, technology, and human perception located in the Palace of Fine Arts in the Marina district of San Francisco. Contains ordering information for "cookbooks," or texts that explain how to construct more than 200 hands-on science exhibits for educators and students. Contains information on Exploratorium publications, and connections to gopher sites that provide resources related to physics and astronomy. Contains general information about the Exploratorium; information about "Exploring," the Exploratorium's quarterly magazine, images of Exploratorium exhibits and by artists in residence; and electronic versions of some Exploratorium exhibits.

Address: http://www.exploratorium.edu
gopher://gopher.exploratorium.edu

Name: Family World

Sponsor: Family World, Inc.

Description:

This family-oriented electronic magazine is a collaborative publication of members of the trade association called Parenting Publications of America. Includes monthly feature articles on a variety of topics such as child development, health, infants, parenting, and dads, daily updated event calendars of family activities across the United States, and a Parent's Forum which allows parents to post questions and share anecdotes. Graphical and text-only versions of the information are offered.

Address: http://family.com

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Organizations of Interest to Parents

THE CENTER FOR THE STUDY OF PARENT INVOLVEMENT

The Center for the Study of Parent Involvement (CSPI) is a clearinghouse dedicated to bridging the gap between home and school, by providing information on parent involvement to school districts, parent and community organizations, students, practitioners, state and national education agencies. CSPI conducts research, provides training and consultation to educators, parent leaders and administrators, and sponsors conferences at which parents and educators share ideas and experiences. CSPI publishes a newsletter that cites outstanding parent involvement programs and reviews books and articles on parent involvement.

Contact:

Center for the Study of Parent Involvement
John F. Kennedy University
370 Camino Pablo
Orinda, CA 94563
Telephone: (510) 254-0110

PARENTS AS TEACHERS NATIONAL CENTER

The Parents as Teachers (PAT) National Center serves parent educators and parents of children from birth to age five. PAT uses a research-based curriculum, providing age-appropriate information to parents on child development and ways to encourage development and learning.

Contact:

Parents as Teachers National Center
10176 Corporate Square Drive, Suite 230
St. Louis, MO 63132
Telephone: (314) 432-4330

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National Organization Phone Numbers

Children's Television Resource and Education Center
(800) 546-1065

Food and Nutrition Information
(301) 504-5719

National Center for Family Literacy
(502) 584-1133

National Organization for Visually Handicapped
(212) 889-3141

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The PARENTING Calendar

CONFERENCE: The Psychology and Politics of Parent Involvement

Date: March 25-29, 1996

Place: Concord, California

Description:

> Daniel Safran, director of the Center for the Study of Parent Involvement, will conduct a training session for individuals who work with parents and parent involvement in pre-school through high school.

Contact:

Daniel Safran, Ph.D.
Center for Group Learning
1894 Granada Drive
Concord, CA 94519
Phone: (510) 253-0456

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Positive Results of Discussing Drugs with Teens

Drug use in junior and high school students is higher if parents do not engage them in discussions about drug use. As reported in Youth Record (Volume 10, #23), a recent survey conducted by PRIDE (National Parents' Resource Institute for Drug Education) revealed that when parents engage their children in discussions about drug use, actual drug use declines. Thomas J. Gleaton, president of PRIDE, stated "the most effective drug prevention program in the world--parental intervention--is used far less than we think."

The survey also indicates that as the child grows older, parents are less inclined to admonish children not to use drugs. Unfortunately, drug use increases with age, and the survey results suggest parents must continue to discuss the topic with their teenage children over time.

Further supporting the need for parents to discourage their children from using drugs is the finding that drug use was higher in white students than in black students, and that white students reported that their parents talk with them about drugs less often than black students reported.

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Parental Support for Improving the Transition from School- to-Work

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As reported in the School-to-Work Report (December 1995), a document titled Transition from School to Work reported results of a survey of parents which indicates parents would like to see changes in school curricula that give students greater opportunities to prepare for the world of work. Specifically, parents would like to see the following changes in current traditional curriculum: a greater focus on a student's career decisions, specialized coursework prior to the junior year of high school, and opportunities for work experiences.

In addition, parents favor replacing the traditional high school diploma with a "certificate of completion" that evaluates students on elements valued by employers: grades, teacher evaluations on attendance, and teamwork and completion of assignments.

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Publications of Interest to Parents

The ERIC Clearinghouse on Elementary and Early Childhood Education recently published the following two digests.

Advertising in the Schools

by Amy Aidman

"Many advertisers view children as a uniquely profitable three-in-one market: as buyers themselves, as influencers of their parents' purchases, and as future adult consumers."

Aidman's article examines the subtle and not-so-subtle ways in which advertising is reaching children in the schools, and what schools should consider as they develop guidelines and policies for dealing with this highly controversial issue.

Parent, Family, and Community Involvement in the Middle Grades

by Barry Rutherford and Shelley H. Billig

This article reports results of a research study conducted at nine school sites, asking the questions: "How do schools and districts involve families and the community as partners in education reform?" and "How do schools and districts create partnerships that acknowledge the roles of the family, school, and community in the growth of the child, and how do these systems interact?" The answers to the questions were synthesized, and eight "lessons" and implications were developed that illustrate some of the ways school districts and middle-grade schools engage the families and communities they serve.

Copies of both of these articles are available at no cost from the ERIC Clearinghouse on Elementary and Early Childhood Education. To request a copy, call 1-800-583-4135.

These two digests and others can also be found on ERIC/EECE's World Wide Web (WWW) site, located at http://ericps.crc.uiuc.edu/ericeece.html

Select the Publications page. The section on Digests links to the Digest section. To obtain an electronic copy of an ERIC/EECE digest, use the "File-Save As" (or similar) feature on your Web browser

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Practice Makes Perfect! Why is that so?

The January 1996 issue of the American Psychological Association's Monitor includes an article describing the brain research of Avi Kami and Leslie Ungerleider at the National Institute of Health. They found that repetitive motor sequences (like those used in typing or playing a musical instrument) trigger the parts of the brain that take in sensory information and control motor functions. The brain then devotes more power to the particular motor sequence, thereby allowing the speed and accuracy of the motor sequence to increase.

This increased speed and accuracy is specific to the particular movement practiced, and cannot be generalized to other movements. For example, a child may be play a piece of music better after repeated practice, but may not simply transfer the improved skill to an unfamiliar piece of music.

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Physicians' Lack of Knowledge on Benefits of Breastfeeding

As reported in the *Journal of Perinatal Education*, a recent study found that a majority of physicians practicing in pediatrics, obstetrics and gynecology, and family medicine lacked knowledge of the benefits of breast feeding, and how to advise women who were breastfeeding.

Significant benefits of breastfeeding as opposed to formula feeding include fewer ear, respiratory, skin, and diarrheal illnesses. Recognizing these benefits, the American Academy of Pediatrics, the American Academy of Family Physicians, and the American College of Obstetrics and Gynecology all encourage their members to promote breastfeeding among their patients. Yet, only half of American mothers attempt to breastfeed their infants, and fewer than 20% continue breastfeeding beyond 5 or 6 months.

The authors of the study suggest that residency programs should include clinically based training programs on nutritional and medical advantages of breastfeeding, as well as use of breast pumps and options for working/breastfeeding mothers. They further recommend that this information be made available to practicing physicians.

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Book Reviews

Salzman, Marian and Robert Pondiscio. 1995. *Kids OnLine: 150 Ways for Kids to Surf the Net for Fun and Information.* New York: Avon Camelot Books. Available from Avon Books for $3.99. 245 p.

Kids interested in learning about cyberspace can use this manual for locating educational and recreational web sites. The manual describes the Internet, Prodigy, and Compuserve, as well as what's free and what's not free.

Caissy, Gail A. 1994. *Early Adolescence: Understanding the 10 to 15 Year Old.* 262p. Available From: Insight Books, 233 Spring Street, New York, NY 10013-1578 ($26.95). ED385387; 262p.

Early adolescence, the period from 10 to 15 years, is a significant transitional period in human development, marking the crossroads between childhood and young adulthood. This book is designed as a guide for parents, teachers, or anyone else who has contact with and who would like to better understand early adolescent children. The chapters in the guide are divided into two main parts: dealing with early adolescent development, behavior, and parenting; and teaching early adolescent students. The chapters deal with the following topics: (1) physical and biological development; (2) the impact of physical development on early adolescents; (3) emotional development; (4) coping with early adolescent emotions; (5) social development; (6) how social development affects early adolescent behavior; (7) intellectual development; (8) what to expect of early adolescents intellectually; (9) managing early adolescent behavior; (10) teachers of early adolescent students; (11) classroom management; (12) teaching and intellectual development; (13) teaching and physical development; (14) social and emotional development and teaching; and (15) the teacher as counselor. A section listing further readings concludes the book.

Clarke-Stewart, K. Alison; And Others. 1994. *Children at Home and in Day Care.* 278p. Available From: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates, Inc., 10 Industrial Avenue, Mahwah, NJ 07430 ($59.95). ED385343; 278p.

This book reports on a study examining the relative effects of family and day care experiences on young children. The study explored the full range of children's experiences in a wide variety of settings and examined how those experiences are related to the children's development. Chapter 1 presents and compares different forms of contemporary day care and discusses their influences on child development. Chapter 2 presents the purpose and design of the study, while chapter 3 discusses the methods used for observing children's experiences in different settings, and the variables created to represent those experiences. Chapter 4 reviews the observed experiences and how they differed according to the setting. Chapter 5 discusses the links between the observations of children's experience at home and in day care. Chapter 6 presents the methods used for assessing children's abilities and behavior in the different domains. Chapters 7 through 12 treat the results of linking experience and development for each domain in turn: family predictors, day care predictors, social competence, sociability with mother, compliance, and peer relations. Chapter 13 presents the conclusions that are drawn from the study and makes some final comments. Contains over 250 references.

Clark, Lynn. 1991. *SOS -- Help for Parents: A Practical Guide for Handling Common Everyday Behavior Problems.* With Video Leader's Guide. Available From: Parents Press, P.O. Box 2180, Bowling Green, KY 42102-2180 (Book, $9.95, plus $1.50 shipping; "How

To Use Time-Out Effectively" 67-minute audiotape, $9.50, plus $1.50 shipping; 65-minute VHS videotape, video leader's guide, parent handouts, and book, $150). Audiotape and videotape components of this multimedia package are available only from the publisher. ED384414; 298p.

This book provides parents with guidance for handling a variety of common behavior problems based on the behavioral approach to child rearing and discipline. This approach suggests that good and bad behavior are both learned and can be changed, and proposes specific methods, skills, procedures, and strategies for parents to use in getting improved behavior from their children. The guide is divided into four sections. Section one presents some fundamentals of child behavior and effective discipline. Some of the causes of children's misbehavior are examined as well as ways of increasing good behavior and eliminating bad ones. Section two provides advice for implementing the "time-out" method. Section three gives suggestions on how to: manage bad behavior away from home; use points, tokens, and contracts; use time-out on two children; use time-out on a toy instead of the child; handle aggressive and dangerous behavior; and help children express feelings. Section four suggests some additional resources for helping children. Each chapter includes a review of the most important ideas and instructions presented. The book's two appendices include an index of problem behaviors, quizzes and answers for parents, more resources for professionals, and tear-out sheets for parent and teachers. Seventy-eight references are included. Appended to the book are materials for a video-discussion parent education program. The accompanying videotape demonstrates child-rearing rules, and errors to avoid, as well as other child management methods. A printed "Video Leader's Guide" for the training leaders provides objectives, suggested outlines for workshops, and guidelines for discussing the behavior vignettes in the video. Workshop evaluation forms and handouts are appended. A parent audio cassette on how to use "time-out" effectively is also part of this multimedia package.

Cronin, Eileen M. 1994. *Helping Your Dyslexic Child: A Guide to Improving Your Child's Reading, Writing, Spelling, Comprehension, and Self-Esteem.* Available From: Prima Publishing, P.O. Box 1260BK, Rocklin, CA 95677 ($19.95, $26.95 Canadian; quantity discount available). ED383996; 207p.

Beginning with a simple test that parents can conduct at home, this book presents a comprehensive and holistic program that any parent or teacher can use to help dyslexic children improve their reading, writing, and spelling. After an introduction that answers parents' questions about dyslexia, chapters in the book are: (1) Is Dyslexia Real?; (2) The Growing Mind; (3) Parenting the Dyslexic Child; (4) Help at School; (5) A Monster Called Homework; (6) Helping the Dyslexic Child with Reading; (7) Self-Esteem and Social Skills; (8) The Adolescent Dyslexic; and (9) The Dyslexic Grows Up. A 63-item glossary is attached. Appendixes present advice on promoting dyslexic children's development before they start school, a list of basic sight vocabulary words, a list of problem words, syllable rules and word structure, penmanship skills, parents' rights in the state of California, and a list of support groups.

Garanzini, Michael J. 1995. *Child-Centered, Family-Sensitive Schools: An Educator's Guide to Family Dynamics.* National Catholic Educational Association, Washington, D.C. 1995. Available From: National Catholic Educational Association, 1077 30th Street, N.W., Suite 100, Washington, DC 20007-3852. ED383449; 285p.

An increasing number of children have family problems that interfere with their ability to learn at school. This book provides information about developing a clearer and more sophisticated child-centered school and classroom by making teachers and administrators more knowledgeable about the varieties of students' family structures, both healthy and unhealthy, and showing them how to be more adept at managing the effects of dysfunctional family systems as they impact the child, the classroom and the school. The first part of the book offers the reader a theoretical framework from which to appreciate the relative needs of the children and how families meet those needs. The chapters in this part are: (1) "The Developmental Needs of Children"; (2) "Understanding Families as Systems"; (3) "The Relational Needs of Children"; (4) "Understanding Relationship Dynamics"; (5) "Children in Dual-Wage and Dual-Career Families"; (6) "Children in Single-Parent Homes"; (7) "Children in

Blended Families"; and (8) "Children in Adoptive Families." The second part examines the variety of dysfunctional family styles or structures and contains chapters: (9) "Dealing with Transference and Countertransference: Why Do Some Students Affect Us the Way They Do?"; (10) "Projection and Parallel Patterns in the Classroom"; (11) "Chronic Illness and the Stuck Child"; (12) "Divorce and the Split Child"; (13) "Substance Abuse and the Chaotic Family"; (14) "The Child in the Fragile Family"; and (15) "The Child in the Abusive Family." The final part of the book offers suggestions for family intervention and support, and contains chapters (16) "Dealing with Families" and (17) "Professional Consultation and Conferencing with Difficult Families."

Schaefer, Charles E.; DiGeronimo, Theresa Foy. 1994. *How To Talk to Your Kids about Really Important Things: For Children Four to Twelve. Specific Questions and Answers and Useful Things To Say.* Available From: Jossey-Bass, Inc., Publishers, 350 Sansome Street, San Francisco, CA 94104 ($15). ED383407; 311p.

Intended to help parents find the words they need to talk to their children and answer their children's practical questions, this book offers practical guidance on a wide range of life's experiences, from family changes such as divorce and remarriage, to controversial subjects such as child abuse and AIDS. The major focus is on children ages 4 to 12; these are the formative years, when children are developing the foundation for basic beliefs, values, and attitudes, and are usually most open to and interested in receiving parental guidance. The book is divided into two parts. Part 1 deals with major crises and big family changes including those related to adoption, an alcoholic parent, death, accidents and natural catastrophes, divorce, the first day of school, a new house, a new baby in the family, and grade repetition. The second part of the book deals with youth concerns, including death, drug abuse, AIDS, homosexuality, prejudice, puberty, sex and reproduction, media violence, and war. Each chapter contains specific guidelines appropriate for the given topic and suggested readings for parents and children.

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Notable Newsletters

The Clarion

Published by the International Cesarean Awareness Network (ICAN), the *Clarion* includes articles related to vaginal and cesarean births, birth stories, and information on ICAN chapters around the world.

Contact:

International Cesarean Awareness Network
1304 Kingsdale Ave.
Redondo Beach, CA 90278
Phone: (310) 542-5368
URL: http://www.efn.org/~djz/birth/add1095/ican.html

Parenting Grandchildren: A Voice for Grandparents, The Brookdale Newsletter from the AARP Grandparent Information Center

This is the newsletter published by the Brookdale Grandparent Information Project, out of the School of Public Health at the University of California/Berkeley. The newsletter includes articles on policy issues with relevance to grandparents raising grandchildren. The "Resource Corner" includes ordering information for publications such as Are You Raising a Grandchild? and other titles related to grandparents raising grandchildren, and conference announcements.

Contact:

Parenting Grandchildren: A Voice for Grandparents
601 E. Street, NW
Washington, DC 20049

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NETWorking: Other Gopher and WWW Sites to Visit

Name: Child Safety Forum

Description:

> This site offers a monthly feature that focuses on a specific room in the house, pointing out potential hazards; a Web Parents Safety Net that allows parents to share tips and experiences related to child safety; and the Child Safety Store that describes items that may be purchased to make the home safer for a child.

Address: http://www.xmission.com/~gastown/safe

Name: Media Literacy Online Project

Sponsor: University of Oregon

Description:

> The goal of the Media Literacy Online Project is to make available information about the influence of media on the lives of children, youth, and adults. In addition to offering articles, bibliographies, guides, and lists with links to other media sites, The Media Literacy Online Project features a new site every week.

Address: http://interact.uoregon.edu/MediaLit/HomePage

Name: National Association for the Education of Young Children

Description: Primarily designed for early childhood educators, this site also offers articles of interest to parents. By selecting the "Parent" button on the homepage, parents can read articles on topics such as media violence and choosing early childhood programs.

Address: http://www.naeyc.org/naeyc

Name: White House for Kids

Sponsor: Welcome to the White House WWW site

Description:

> This site is designed for elementary school children interested in learning about the federal government. The White House cat, "Socks" is the guide, taking children on a tour of the White House. Children can learn about the history of the White House, other children who have lived there, and other pets who have lived there. An electronic newsletter is also available, and visitors to the site may send e-mail via a friendly interactive on-line mode to Socks, President Clinton, Vice President Gore, or Mrs. Clinton.

Address: http://www.whitehouse.gov/WH/kids/html/home.html

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Organizations of Interest to Parents

ASPIRA Association, Inc.: An Investment in Latino Youth

ASPIRA (taken from the Spanish word "aspirar" which means to aspire to something greater) is a national non-profit organization serving Puerto Rican and other Latino/a youth and their families, through leadership and education. Publications available at low cost include fact sheets on Hispanic health, education, and violence, and a quarterly newsletter. Many of the publications are available in Spanish as well as English.

Contact:

ASPIRA Association, Inc.
1112 16th Street, NW
Suite 340
Washington, DC 20036
(202) 835-3600

Mothers At Home

Mothers At Home is a national, non-profit organization that supports women who choose to be at home with their children. Members of Mothers At Home receive the monthly journal, "Welcome Home", and opportunities to educate the media and those involved in public policy regarding proposed legislation affecting children and family life. Mothers At Home also works toward breaking stereotypes and misconceptions about mothering in today's society.

Contact:

Mothers At Home
8310A Old Courthouse Road
Vienna, VA 22182
Phone: 703-790-8587

The American Academy of Pediatrics

The American Academy of Pediatrics (AAP) distributes brochures on a variety of parenting concerns, including learning disabilities, children's growth and milestones, temper tantrums, and dental health. AAP also provides a cable television series on children's health, which airs on the Family Channel on Sundays at 11:30 a.m. (Eastern/Pacific time).

Contact:

American Academy of Pediatrics
141 Northwest Point Blvd.
P.O. Box 927
Elk Grove Village, IL 60009-0927
(708) 228-5005

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National Organization Phone Numbers

Asthma and Allergy Foundation of America
(970) 221-9165
(800) 727-8462

Center for the Study of Parent Involvement
(510) 254-0110

International Reading Association
(800) 336-READ extension 266

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The PARENTING Calendar

CONFERENCE: Children's Defense Fund Annual National Conference "Healing America: Building a Movement to Leave No Child Behind"

Date: February 8-10, 1996

Place: Charlotte, North Carolina

Description:

> The 1996 conference goals are to rekindle a spirit of compassion and caring and mutual respect in communities for all children, set a tone of inclusion rather than exclusion, and affirm our nation's diversity as an asset, not a problem. Workshop sessions include "Community Building," "Strengthening Families," and "Serving Special Needs and Special Populations."

Contact:

Children's Defense Fund Conference
P.O. Box 80390
Baltimore, MD 21280-0390
(301) 353-1807

CONFERENCE: "Children '96": Children's Welfare League of America National Conference

Date: March 27-29, 1996

Place: Washington, DC

Description:

> Distinguished experts in child welfare will be speakers at the conference. Workshops will focus on the future of child welfare, practice, policy, and management.

Contact:

Children '96/Child Welfare League of America
440 First Street, NW, Suite 310
Washington, DC 20001-2085
(202) 942-0308 Sponsor: University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign, the Illinois State Board of Education, Champaign Unit 4 Schools, Urbana District 116 Schools, Prairienet, Champaign Public Library and Information Center, National Center for Supercomputing Applications (NCSA), and Time-Warner Cable

Date: April 20, 1996

Place: Krannert Art Museum, University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign

Description:

> The keynote address, teaching demonstration, and afternoon sessions are designed for parents, teachers, and administrators who wish to explore the arts as a way to build critical

thinking and problem-solving skills, learn more about Visual Thinking Strategies, and enhance the role of Visual Art in their homes and schools.

Contact:

University of Illinois
Conferences and Institutes
302 E. John Suite 202
Champaign, IL 61820
(217) 333-2881

Or

Linda Duke
205 Kinkead Pavillion
Krannert Art Museum
500 East Peabody
Champaign, IL 61820
(217) 244-4173
e-mail: l-duke@uiuc.edu

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NPIN

National Parent Information Network

Parent News for March 1996

Volume 2, Number 3

- Education: The Gateway to America's Future, Third Annual State of American Education Address, St. Louis, MO, February 28, 1996, Richard W. Riley, U.S. Secretary of Education
- Conference Report on Student Motivation
- Top 10 Changes Affecting Students since the 1960s
- Top 10 Questions to Ask when Choosing Your Child's School
- HOTLINE for Parents: March 6-8
- Benefits of Head Start
- Is Your School Confronting Sex Dicrimination
- Planning a "Baby Safety" Shower
- Summaries/Reviews of Books for Parents
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Artwork by Andrea Shields.
Send comments to NPIN Webmaster

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Parent News for March, 1996

Education: The Gateway to America's Future

Third Annual State of American Education Address. St. Louis, MO; February 28, 1996.

Richard W. Riley, U.S. Secretary of Education

- Introduction
- Education: The Gateway to America's Future
- The Era of Dumbing Down Is Over
- Becoming a Nation of Readers
- The Challenge to Support the American Family
- The Challenge to Make Our Schools Safe
- The Challenge to Achieve High Standards
- The Challenge to Effectively Innovate
- The Challenge to Prepare Young People for Work
- Keeping the Doors to College Wide
- The Challenge to Come Together as Americans

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Conference Report on Student Motivation

In 1990, the Office of Educational Research held a conference to look at issues related to student motivation. Titled "Hard Work and High Expectations," the conference brought together educational researchers who study student motivation from different social, cultural, and instructional perspectives. The researchers reported on students' beliefs about their academic success:

> Most students believe their abilities and efforts are the main reasons for school achievement, but prefer to be thought of as "smart" rather than "hard-working" because students who are hard-working are thought to be overly ambitious or lacking in ability.
>
> To avoid unpopular labels, students seek a place that is not too high and not too low, and are indifferent to hard work.
>
> To avoid the stigma of having tried and failed, low- achieving students say learning is not important, and withhold efforts to learn.

According to the researchers, these beliefs are a result of the following four conditions of school life:

> Students have few incentives to study. Schools reward high achievement, not hard work itself.
>
> School policies inadvertently discourage student effort. Many schools have tried to increase graduation rates and student success by allowing students to design their own courses. While this may boost educational progress, it also allows students to avoid difficult tasks.
>
> Peer pressure motivates students to stay in school and not fail, yet discourages high achievement.
>
> Teachers' efforts to protect disadvantaged students' self- esteem often result in excusing disadvantaged students from the effort serious learning requires.

A significant conclusion of the conference was that school reforms will have no meaning if students themselves are not motivated to put forth the effort to learn. Educational researchers across the country are studying student motivation and what can be done to increase students' efforts to learn. Schools can consider employing the following strategies:

> Establish ways to balance recognition given to ability as well as effort. Set goals for students that can be achieved with high effort and reward achievement of the goals. Develop alternatives to the traditional awards of high scores and class rankings.
>
> Enhance the status of "doing your best." Reward excellence in more than just the core curriculum.
>
> Eliminate obstacles to innovative classroom practices that give students opportunities to help each other in problem- solving situations, such as cooperative learning.
>
> Demand that athletes meet the same standards as others, thereby placing greater importance on academic skills.
>
> Implement incentive systems that motivate students to acquire knowledge rather than compete against each other.
>
> Teach children the skill of "how to learn" rather than simply completing tasks.
>
> Provide students with information and support necessary to fulfill course demands. Examples of

this are: explain clearly what is expected and how it will be graded; provide guidance in how to study and complete assignments; provide for extensive practice of instructional objectives; give extensive feedback on quizzes, tests and homework; give significant credit for completion of homework.

Note: This information was excerpted from "Issues in Education: Hard Work and High Expectations: Motivating Students to Learn," published in 1992 by the Office of Educational Research and Improvement of the United States Department of Education.

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Top 10 Changes Affecting Students Since the 1960s

The January 15, 1996 edition of *Youth Report: The Semi-Monthly Report on Federal Youth-related Policy* included an article on a recent publication by the American Association of School Administrators. The report, *How Students Have Changed...A Call to Action for our Children's Future*, reports results of a survey of school principals, in which they identified the following changes affecting students during the past 30 years:

1. The number of dysfunctional families has increased.
2. High technology has influenced school, work, and home life.
3. Children are threatened by crime, violence, and poverty.
4. Communities are becoming more diverse.
5. The mass media give children more knowledge at an earlier age than in the past.
6. Students are questioning authority, and turning away from traditional values and responsibilities.
7. The hurried pace of society contributes to the lack of a sense of community.
8. The changing workplace demands higher levels of literacy.
9. Knowledge about learning styles demands new kinds of education.
10. Due to lack of parental attention, peers exert a strong influence on values.

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Top Ten Questions to Ask when Choosing Your Child's School

The National Association of Elementary School Principals conducted a survey of elementary and middle school principals in urban, suburban, and rural schools across the country, in which the principals were asked to identify the questions parents should be asking when choosing a school for their child. The top ten questions parents should ask are:

1. How many students are assigned to one teacher? (Lower student/teacher ratios are more beneficial to the child, especially in the primary grades.)
2. Is the library or media center well-equipped AND well-used?
3. How is reading taught? Is there a balance of "phonics" and "whole language" instruction? (Phonics focuses on sounding out letters and letter groups; whole language uses children's literature, periodicals, and may or may not use basal reading textbooks.)
4. Will my child have access to a computer? How are computers used for instructional purposes?
5. How is discipline handled? (Request a copy of the school handbook and/or the discipline policy.)
6. What is the predominant teaching philosophy at the school? (Lecture? Large/small grouping? Team teaching?)
7. In addition to teachers, are other professional specialists available? (Speech therapists, librarian, counselor, psychologist?)
8. How are students graded, and how are grades reported to parents?
9. How often are textbooks and classroom materials reviewed and updated?
10. Are teachers, principal, and other staff members available for parent meetings after school hours?

Ask for a tour of the school, noting the following: Are children interested and involved in learning? Are they using calculators, audio-visuals, science or math equipment? Are teachers effectively managing classroom discipline? Are halls and classrooms filled with student-produced work? Do visitors seem welcome? Is the school facility in good repair?

The survey results will be used in a forthcoming book by Charles Harrison, titled *Choosing Your Child's School*, and will be available from Career Press.

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HOTLINE for Parents: March 6-8

A nationwide toll-free Hotline for parents to ask principals questions related to education will be available during the annual convention of the National Association of Elementary School Principals. The Hotline schedule is as follows (Eastern Standard Time):

March 6, 1996 11:00 AM to 7:00 PM
March 7, 1996 7:00 AM to 7:00 PM
March 8, 1996 7:00 AM to 7:00 PM

The toll free phone number is 1-800-944-1601.

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Benefits of Head Start

The Center for the Future of Children, a nonprofit organization, recently conducted a comprehensive review of research on long- term effects of preschool programs. At a news briefing to release the results of the report which looked at 144 studies spanning 30 years, Richard Behrman, director of the center, noted the benefits of Head Start and other preschool programs. These benefits include higher achievement test scores, and higher high school graduation rates and wages. Amidst moves by policymakers to cut back on spending for Head Start, the report will provide advocates of preschool programs with information that may help maintain or increase funding for such programs.

The report "The Future of Children: Long-Term Outcomes of Early Childhood Programs" is available at no charge from:

Lisa Aguilar, Circulation Assistant
Center for the Future of Children
David and Lucile Packard Foundation
300 Second Street, Suite 102
Los Altos, California 94022
(415) 948-3696

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Is Your School Confronting Sex Discrimination?

The Winter 1995/1996 issue of *Action for Better Schools*, the newsletter of the National Coalition of Education Activists, included an article titled: "How To Tell if Your School is Confronting Sex Discrimination."

To answer the following questions, parents can talk with other parents, students, and school staff, and observe classes and school activities:

Are girls called on to answer questions in class as often as boys? Do girls and boys receive equal attention and feedback?

Do school staff actively work to prevent sexual harassment and gender-based teasing by confronting the episodes as they arise?

Are school activities co-ed unless there are valid reasons for separating boys and girls?

Do classroom teaching materials such as posters, books, and other media equally represent women?

Do classroom materials represent men and women as being both potentially strong or weak; dependent or independent?

Are women represented historically as well as in projections for the future?

Do boys and girls have equal access to the same quality and quantity of space and equipment, in and out of the classroom?

Are school rules applied with equal fairness to boys and girls?

Is the school staff aware of negative aspects of complimenting girls' appearance?

Is school staff composed equally of men and women in all levels of authority?

Has the school staff been provided with training in dealing with sexual discrimination and harassment?

Does the school have a policy defining sexual harassment and specifying consequences and a course of action?

Does the school actively work toward informing the community and media about the need for sex equity in the schools?

The article lists the following organizations as sources for information:

National Women's History Project
7738 Bell Road
Windsor, CA 95492-8518
(707) 838-6000

Center for Research on Women
106 Central Street
Wellesley, MA 02181

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Planning a "Baby Safety" Shower

In response to the fact that more children die from accidents and injuries than any childhood diseases, the Consumer Product Safety Commission, the Food Marketing Institute, and Gerber Products Company have developed a "Baby Safety Shower" planning guide explaining how to host a Baby Safety Shower, and a Baby Safety Checklist. These materials are part of a national campaign introduced by Hillary Rodham Clinton to keep children safe in their homes. Families and friends of expectant parents can host Baby Safety showers with games, activities, and written materials to make homes safer for infants and children.

To order the planning guide and checklist, call the Consumer Product Safety Commission at 1-800-638-2772, ext. 358.

The materials can also be viewed in the publication section of the National Child Care Information Center (NCCIC) Web Site. The URL for the NCCIC is: http://ericps.crc.uiuc.edu/nccic/nccichome.html

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Summaries/Reviews of Books for Parents

Strudwick, Karen, John Spiker, and Jay Arney. 1995. *Internet for Parents*. Bellevue, WA: Resolution Business Press ($24.95). 379 p. ISBN 0-945264-17-8.

Written for parents who aren't sure whether or not they should get connected to the Internet, this book is divided into three parts: Part 1 includes chapters on the Internet and families, and the Internet and schools; Part 2 includes chapters on history of the Internet, hardware/software to get started, and surfing the Internet; Part 3 includes chapters on the World Wide Web, conducting research on the Web, and using e-mail; and Part 4 contains internet resources and a resource index.

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Notable Newsletters

The Winnetka Alliance for Early Childhood Newsletter

Published by the Winnetka Alliance for Early Childhood, this newsletter focuses on providing information on the healthy growth and development of children from birth to age eight. The Winter '96 issue included articles on how children's friendships develop, young children and play, children's literature, current movies for children, and first aid and medical supplies. A research review on spanking, and a child development specialist question/answer column are also included.

Published quarterly, a 1-year subscription is $12; two- subscriptions are $20.

Contact:
The Winnetka Alliance for Early Childhood
1235 Oak Street
Winnetka, IL 60093

Child Health Alert

The goal of Child Health Alert is to translate medical jargon and technical information into clear, concise language. Each issue of Child Health Alert contains information on child health care, including: summaries and commentaries of articles in medical journals, product recalls, environmental issues, diet and nutrition, and infections.

The subscription price for 1 year (eleven issues) is $29.

Contact:
Paula L. Mitchell
Child Health Alert
P.O. Box 610228
Newton Highlands, MA 02161
(617) 239-1762

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NETWorking: Other Gopher and WWW Sites to Visit

Links to the Internet sites listed on this page can be found in the "Internet Resources for Parents and Those Who Work with Parents" section of this Web site.

Name:
The Future of Children

Sponsor:
The David and Lucile Packard Foundation

Description:
The Future of Children is a journal summarizing research and policy issues related to the well-being of children. Topics covered in the journal include: early childhood education; low birth weight; the environment and children's health; welfare to work programs and teen parents; school readiness; and class size in public schools.

URL:
http://www.futureofchildren.org

Name:
Kids and Parents on the Web

Sponsor:
Resolution Business Press, Inc.

Description:
This site provides links to over 800 resources with information on education and family use of the web. The range of topics covers items from Aboriginal and Native American Studies, Adoption, Disabilities, Feminism, Home Schooling, Museums on the Web, and Schools on the Web.

URL:
http://www.halcyon.com/ResPress/kids.htm

Name:
National Parent Teacher Association (PTA)

Description:
This web site includes: descriptions of PTA publications arranged by subject headings including: Parent Involvement, Talking with Children, and the Home-School Connection; the archives of the PTA; PTA Issues and Initiatives; PTA Calendar of Events; and PTA On the Net, which links to local and state PTA Organizations.

URL:
http://www.pta.org

Name:
Wisconsin Clearinghouse for Prevention Resources

Sponsor:
University of Wisconsin-Madison, University Health Services

Description:
This web site provides information on alcohol and drug abuse prevention. Materials available free or at minimal cost include pamphlets, posters, software, curricula, activity books, and videotapes divided into categories such as: Prevention Materials for 5-12 year old children (includes articles on drug and alcohol prevention, self esteem and life skills, and violence prevention); and Parents and Families (family communication, self esteem, parenting information - "Parents Guide to Teenage Parties" and "Yes, You May Use the Car, But First").

URL:
http://danenet.wicip.org/wisclearhouse

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Organizations of Interest to Parents

Council for American Private Education

Based in Washington, DC, the Council for American Private Education (CAPE) is a coalition of national organizations that serve private elementary and secondary schools. The council advocates the role of private schools through conferences and by providing information and testimony on governmental legislation related to private schooling. CAPE links private schools to each other and presents awards in recognition of outstanding private schools. Publications include a monthly newsletter, a directory of private schools, and pamphlets on topics related to private schooling.

Contact:
Joyce G. McCray
1726 M St. NW, Suite 703
Washington, DC 20036-4502
Phone: 202-659-0016
Fax: 202-659-0018

Food and Nutrition Information Center

The Food and Nutrition Information Center provides information or educational materials on food and human nutrition. A listing of their collection of materials is available by calling 800-3- DIALOG or 800-345-4BRS. The materials are available to parents through interlibrary loan at local libraries. The public can access the Food and Nutrition Information Center using the information provided below.

In addition, the organization maintains a discussion group, called "Mealtalk" about the school lunch program. The discussion list address is: mealtalk@nalusda.gov

Contact:
Shirley King Evans
10301 Baltimore Blvd., Room 304
Beltsville, MD 20705-2351
Phone: 301-504-5719
Fax: 301-504-6409

Child Care Action Campaign

The Child Care Action Campaign is a national child care advocacy organization serving the general public, parents, government agencies, and the media. The organization sponsors an electronic discussion group called "Children, Youth and Families Forum" which provides information on childcare advocacy and current legislation. The discussion list e-mail address is listed below.

Contact:
Dolores Schaefer
330 7th Avenue, 17th Floor
New York, NY 10001
Phone: 212-239-0138
Fax: 212-268-6515

Parent News for March, 1996

The PARENTING Calendar

CONFERENCE:
Activating Children Through Technology

Date:
March 14-15, 1996

Place:
Horrabin Hall
Western Illinois University
Macomb, Illinois

Description: This conference will offer sessions and hands-on opportunities to learn about using computers and adaptive peripherals with young children with disabilities.

Contact:
ACTT VII
27 Horrabin Hall
Western Illinois University
Macomb, IL 61455
(309) 298-1634

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NPIN
National Parent Information Network

Parent News for April 1996

Volume 2, Number 4

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- Research on Benefits of Magnet Schools
- "NetDay96" - California's Effort to Provide Schools with Internet Access
- Take Our Daughters to Work Day
- Child Care on Snow Days
- "Early Years Are Learning Years" - Public Awareness Campaign
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- NET Working: Other Gopher and WWW Sites to Visit
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Artwork by Andrea Shields.
Send comments to NPIN Webmaster.

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Parent News for April, 1996

Stand for Children

On June 1, 1996, parents, teachers, families, and others concerned about America's children will gather in Washington DC at the Lincoln Memorial to "Stand for Children." Convened by the Children's Defense Fund and endorsed by more than 750 national, state, and local organizations, this gathering will provide the opportunity for Americans to Stand for Children, and to dedicate themselves and the country to doing more to make sure that no child is left behind in our society.

A huge turnout is expected for this event. Individuals interested in participating in this event can contact Stand For Children for information on organizing a bus trip for school staffs or other interested groups; obtaining posters, publicity kits, or fliers for promoting the event; and receiving fact sheets on children's status in the United States. If you want to organize a group to attend, please make your arrangements as soon as possible.

Stand for Children has a site on the world wide web. The URL is: http://www.imn.com/cdf/stand.html

Contact:

Stand For Children
1832 Connecticut Avenue, NW
Washington, DC 20009
1-800-233-1200
E-mail: standinfo@mailback.com

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Parent News for April, 1996

School Uniforms in Public Schools

The U.S. Department of Education recently developed a *Manual on School Uniforms*, a booklet containing guidelines for public schools to use in developing and implementing policies on school uniforms. Presidential support of school uniforms was the focus of news stories in many publications in February and March.

Citing the experiences of schools that have adopted policies on uniforms in California, Virginia, Maryland, Ohio, and Michigan, President Clinton supports their use, noting the following benefits: improved attendance and achievement, reduction in the incidence of crime and violent acts, and freedom from peer pressure to impress friends with clothing. In a *Memorandum to Secretary of Education Richard W. Riley*, President Clinton stated, "If student uniforms can help deter school violence... and foster a better learning environment, then we should offer our strong support to the schools that try them."

Print copies of the manual were scheduled to be distributed to the nation's 16,000 school districts in March, and a free print copy can be obtained by calling 1-800-624-0100 and requesting the *Manual on School Uniforms*.

The manual is also available on the world wide web, at the following URL:
http://www.ed.gov/updates/uniforms.html

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Parent News for April, 1996

Older Men as Fathers

The February 1996 issue of the American Psychological Association's *APA Monitor* included an article describing older men who become fathers as being more involved with their children than younger men who are fathers.

Researchers found that younger men entering fatherhood are more likely than older men to use physical discipline and to enter into power struggles with their children. Often at the start of their worklives, they may be more concerned with providing for their families than older fathers, and work and economic issues take large amounts of their time and energy.

Older men are more likely to have achieved economic stability and have more time to give to their parenting. Many older fathers seem to have a sense that being a parent merits a higher priority than anything else in their lives. Older men may remember the experience they had with a distant breadwinner father and be in a position not to repeat this pattern with their own children.

However, older fathers often find themselves concerned with financing a college education at the time when they are likely to be entering retirement. Many older fathers also express concern that they will not live long enough to see some of the important milestones in their child's adult life.

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Parent News for April, 1996

Research on the Benefits of Magnet Schools

A recent research study indicates students in public magnet schools score higher on achievement tests than their counterparts in private, religious, or comprehensive high schools.

The study, conducted by Adam Gamoran, a sociology and education policy professor at the University of Wisconsin-Madison, analyzed data from the National Educational Longitudinal Study, a federally supported testing program gathering test score data for 24,000 students as they move from 8th grade to 10th grade. In a simple comparison of raw test scores, students in private and religious schools appear to do better; however, when Gamoran controlled the data for socioeconomic mix and students' prior academic achievement, test scores of students in the magnet schools were higher.

Speculating as to the reason for this finding, Gamoran says magnet schools get more resources and use them more effectively. Rolf Blank, director of education indicators for the Council of Chief State School Officers in Washington, says the reason may be that students at magnet schools are there with a specific purpose in mind.

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Parent News for April, 1996

"NetDay96" - California's Effort to Provide Schools with Internet Access

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Technology industries, public schools, and communities in California designated a day in early March as "NetDay96." The plan was a cooperative effort to provide at least 20% of the state's schools with cables necessary to gain access to the Internet. President Clinton and Vice President Gore were present to lend a hand at installing the cables, which is a first step in getting schools set up to utilize the Internet. John Miranda, principal at Mira-Mesa High School in San Diego County, says the next step is to secure funding to put computers in the schools that have been wired.

NetDay96 has a home page on the Internet, providing details on the organization of the event and participating industries. This strategy may work in your communities' schools! NetDay 96 also has a map graphically representing areas of the state that participated in this program. For more information, visit the NetDay 96 word wide web site at:

http://www.netday96.com

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Parent News for April, 1996

Take Our Daughters to Work Day

Thursday, April 25, 1996, is "Take Our Daughters to Work Day." Sponsored by the Ms. Foundation, "Take Our Daughters To Work Day" was launched in 1993, and is observed in the United States and 14 other countries. On this day, girls and young women will visit work sites of parents and other adults to learn more about jobs, life options, and science-based careers.

For example, the Society of Women Engineers and The College of Engineering at the University of Illinois, will provide tours, lab demonstrations and discussions for girls and young women, to acquaint them with career options in engineering.

"Take Our Daughters to Work Day" T-shirts, buttons, organizers' kits, and Action Plans for Improving the Lives of Girls are available in English, Spanish, and Chinese, by calling 1-800-676- 7780.

This year the Ms. Foundation is holding a nation-wide sweepstakes, awarding three $20,000 scholarships to girls between the ages of 9 and 17. Recipients will be chosen at random, and awards will be in the form of U.S. Savings Bonds. To enter the sweepstakes, send a self-addresses stamped envelope by the May 31, 1996 deadline, to:

Ms. Foundation for Women
Take Our Daughters to Work Sweepstakes Entry
P.O.Box 397
Camden, NC 27921

The URL for the Ms. Foundation web site is:
http://www.feminist.com/mstake.htm

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Parent News for April, 1996

Child Care on Snow Days

Parents in Boston have an innovative option for child care on days when schools are closed due to bad weather. A consulting firm, Children's Conference Child Care, Inc., recruits interested employers during the summer months, and then visits the work sites to locate areas that can be used to provide temporary child care for employees in the event of school-mandated snow days.

The firm purchases supplies, toys, and games that are housed on site. Staff for the temporary child care sites are primarily local school teachers who also are not in school during snow days. Potential staff go through an interview process conducted by the firm, which also takes care of matters such as insurance. Children's Conference Child Care is expanding to provide their service for school holidays as well as snow days. The program is paid for by company retainers and client fees. For more information, contact:

Children's Conference Child Care Inc.
42 Spring Park Avenue
Boston, MA 02130
Phone: (617) 492-6925

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Parent News for April, 1996

"Early Years Are Learning Years" - Public Awareness Campaign

The National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC) is sponsoring a public awareness campaign to call attention to the importance of quality programs in the early years. Throughout the year, news releases will be available targeting parents and individuals working for and with young children. The news releases will provide information on topics such as the signs of a great preschool program, and will be posted every other week on NAEYC's World Wide Web Site (http://www.naeyc.org/naeyc). To receive information by mail, contact:

National Association for the Education of Young Children
1509 16th Street NW
Washington, DC 20036-1426
Phone: (202) 232-8777
Toll Free: (800) 424-2460

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Parent News for April, 1996

Summaries/Reviews of Books for Parents

Schor, Edward L., Ed. 1995. *Caring for Your School-Age Child: Ages 5 to 12. The Complete and Authorative Guide.* Elk Grove Village, IL: American Academy of Pediatrics. Available from: AAP Publications, P.O. Box 927, Elk Grove Village, IL 60009-0927 (Catalog No. CB0003, $19.95. Add $4.95 for shipping. Discount on quantity orders of 10 or more copies). PS024021; 596p.

The middle years of childhood are challenging for both children and their parents, as children master skills and develop behaviors that will strongly influence their later health and well-being. This parenting manual offers up-to-date information and guidelines on key emotional, physical, and behavioral issues that parents of school-age children confront. The chapters in the guide are divided into nine parts, as follows: (1) "Promoting Health and Normal Development," including physical development, safety and injury prevention, and sexuality; (2) "Nutrition and Physical Fitness," including special diets, and physical fitness and sports; (3) "Personal and Social Development," including the child's developing sense of self, and dealing with prejudice; (4) "Behavior and Discipline," including communicating with the child, and managing common behavior problems; (5) "Emotional Problems and Behavior Disorders," including stress, habit formation, fears and phobias, and child abuse; (6) "Family Matters," including strengthening the family, developing as a parent, siblings and sibling rivalry, divorce, single parenting, and stepfamilies; (7) "Children in School," including parent involvement, and learning disorders; (8) "Chronic Health Problems," including school issues for chronically ill children, and family adjustment; and (9) "Common Medical Problems," including chronic problems such as asthma and diabetes, and common emergencies, such as bleeding, seizures, and poisoning. (HTH)

Hewitt, Deborah. 1995. *So This is Normal Too? Teachers and Parents Working Out Developmental Issues in Young Children.* Available from: Redleaf Press, 450 North Syndicate, St. Paul, MN 55104 ($14.95; Discount available on quantity orders). PS023805; 142p.

Intended to facilitate communication between parents and child care providers through creative problem solving, this guide explains young children's normal developmental behaviors that frequently cause concern, and identifies factors parents and caregivers can control in the environment that may have an immediate positive response from a child. The guide consists of 16 chapters on the following topics: (1) separation anxiety; (2) toilet training; (3) finicky eating; (4) activity level; (5) getting attention; (6) sexual curiosity; (7) tall tales and falsehoods; (8) power struggles; (9) temper tantrums; (10) superhero play; (11) joining a group of players; (12) turn taking; (13) inappropriate language and swearing; (14) tattling; (15) aggression; and (16) biting. Each chapter is divided into four sections. The first section of each chapter, "For Providers," contains information for early childhood settings, while the second section, "For Parent(s)," offers advice for the family context. These two sections are of similar structure and include a description of the behavior, observation questions, suggestions for working with both the provider and the parent, guidelines regarding when to seek professional help, and further readings on related topics. The third and fourth sections of each chapter, "A Plan for Action" and "Parent(s) and Provider Action Form," present an overview of the chapter and a planning form to help providers and parents plan, modify, and promote consistency between the early childhood setting and home. Contains 60 references. (AP)

Morse, Philip S.; Brand, Lillian B. 1995. *Young Children at Home and in School: 212 Educational Activities for Their Parents, Teachers, and Caregivers.* Needham Heights, MA: Allyn and Bacon Publishers. Available from: Allyn and Bacon Publishers, 160 Gould Street, Needham Heights, MA 02194 (cloth: ISBN-0-205-15419-0; paper: ISBN-0-205-15420-4, $15.95). ED385366; 195p.

This source book is designed to give parents, teachers, and other caregivers of young children more than

200 sample activities for children that are fun, easy, and educationally sound. Chapter 1 introduces principles of early childhood programs, the "home-school connection," and tips on how to communicate with children. This chapter also gives an overview of the book and includes 13 references. The overview briefly describes seven key areas of the child's physical, intellectual, social, and emotional development. These areas correspond with the titles and activities in chapters 2 through 8. Chapter 2 discusses body movement, and includes activities for body awareness and coordinating large and small muscles. Chapter 3 describes listening and hearing activities. The activities in Chapter 4 are centered around language. "Looking and Seeing" is the focus of chapter 5, which includes activities dealing with: (1) recognizing colors; (2) identifying shapes; (3) distinguishing left from right; and (4) learning letters. Chapter 6 provides mathematics activities, while chapter 7 presents science activities. Chapter 8 presents social and emotional development activities, including ones that deal with children's self concepts, relationships, and ideas of responsibility. Each chapter includes a short introduction that discusses the major concepts behind the activities. (BC)

Baker, Colin. 1995. *A Parents' and Teachers' Guide to Bilingualism. Bilingual Education and Bilingualism 5.* Bristol, PA: Multilingual Matters. Available from: Multilingual Matters, 1900 Frost Road, Suite 101, Bristol, PA 19007 (paperback: ISBN-1-85359-264-1; hardbound: ISBN-1-85359-265-X). ED385138; 256p.

In a question-and-answer format, the guide responds to common queries about bilingualism in children. The first section poses and answers questions about family issues and bilingualism, including family communication, support of language development, cultural and social context for language development, social integration, and parent language learning. The second section focuses on more specific language development issues such as language dominance and fluency, intelligence and achievement, multilingualism, variability related to age and gender, language attitudes, code-switching and translation, educational strategies, and employment prospects for bilinguals. Concerns about problems and disadvantages of bilingualism are addressed in the third section, including language mixing, behavioral and developmental problems, prejudice, and language choice. Section 4 is devoted to questions about reading and writing instruction and support for literacy development. A wide variety of education-related questions are answered in the fifth section. These concern basic education issues, bilingual education, academic achievement and underachievement, and language use in the classroom. The concluding section contains miscellaneous questions and answers. A glossary and index are included. (MSE)

Olweus, Dan. 1995. *Bullying at School: What We Know and What We Can Do.* Willinston, VT: Blackwell Publishers/AIDC. Available from: Blackwell Publishers/AIDC, P.O. Box 20, Willinston, VT 05495-0020 (paperback: ISBN-0-631-19241-7, $14.95; hardcover: ISBN-0-631-19239-5). ED394438; 140p.

This book describes survey data and an intervention program conducted in Sweden and Norway as part of a government-led nationwide campaign against bullying. The survey data support some conventional wisdom about bullying, but also destroy many long-held myths about bullies and victims. The goals of the intervention program were to: (1) reduce or eliminate both direct bullying (open physical or verbal attacks) and indirect bullying (social isolation, confidence reduction); (2) achieve better peer relations at school; and (3) create conditions that enabled victims and bullies to function better in and out of the school setting. The book's introduction sets out the history of research into bullying. Part 1 defines bullying and surveys what is known about bully/victim problems among school children: where it occurs, characteristics of bullies and victims, and causes and extent of bullying. This survey is based primarily on four research projects (a longitudinal study and studies connected with a campaign against bully/victim problems). Guides for identifying bullies and victims are included. Part 2 gives a detailed presentation of the goals and methods of the intervention program, and shows how bully/victim problems can be addressed and counteracted at the school, classroom, and individual student levels. Part 3 summarizes the positive effects of the intervention program over a 2-year period; guiding principles of the program are also presented. Part 4 gives additional practical advice for implementing the program at a particular school and describes a set of core program components especially important for implementing the program. Contains 76 references. (TM)

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Parent News for April, 1996

NETWorking: Other Gopher and WWW Sites to Visit

Name: Keeping Kids Reading

Description:
In addition to providing short articles on reading to children and motivating children to read, this site links to other sites containing information about childrens books and reading, such as on-line bookstores, and bestseller lists.

Address: http://www.tiac.net/users/maryl

Name: National Program for Playground Safety

Sponsor: University of Northern Iowa

Description:
This site addresses the growing concern for children's safety on the playground. It provides access to the latest information on playground safety and injury prevention. The site also contains statistics on playground injury and a list of resources for information on developing safe playground.

Address: (for graphical Web browsers):
http://www.uni.edu/co e/playgrnd/main.html

Address: (for text-based Web browsers):
http://www.uni.edu/co e/playtext/main.html

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Parent News for April, 1996

Organizations of Interest to Parents

Children's Defense Fund

The Children's Defense Fund (CDF) is a private nonprofit organization, providing a strong and effective voice for the children of America, who cannot vote, lobby, or speak for themselves. The CDF goal is to educate the nation about the needs of children, and to encourage preventative investment in children before they become ill, drop out of school, or get into trouble. CDF sponsors the Leave No Child Behind movement, dedicated to seeing that every child has a Healthy Start, a Head Start, a Safe Start, and a Fair Start. *CDF Reports* is the monthly newsletter of the Children's Defense Fund; a one year subscription is $29.95. The CDF has a homepage on the world wide web.

Contact:

Children's Defense Fund
Dept. V, 25 E Street, N.W.
Washington, DC 20001
Phone: (301) 662-3500
Toll Free: (800) 662-3510
Email: cdf@tmn.com
URL: http://www.tmn.com/cdf/index.html

R.O.C.K.I.N.G., INC., (Raising Our Children's Kids: An Intergenerational Network of Grandparenting, Inc.)

ROCKING is an organization dedicated to providing emotional and practical support for grandparents and relative caregivers who are raising children. ROCKING provides information to grandparents by publishing bulletins on topics such as "The Empowerment of Grandparents" and "Are You Raising a Grandchild?" Other materials include information on finding financial assistance, and legal aide.

Contact:

R.O.C.K.I.N.G., Inc.
P.O. Box 96
Niles, MI 49120
Phone: (616) 683-9038
FAX: (616) 683-2058

Active Parenting

Active Parenting is a publishing company producing videos and materials for professionals working in the following areas: parent education, parent involvement, teacher-in-service, coping with loss, and, children's self-esteem. Active Parenting maintains a site on the World Wide Web, called "Active Parenting On-Line" which can be accessed with the URL listed below. In addition to their own publications, books written by leaders in education can be obtained through their catalog.

Contact:

Barbara L. Propst
810 Franklin Court, Suite B
Marietta, GA 30067
Phone: 1-800-825-0060
Fax: 404-429-0334
E-mail address: cservice@activeparenting.com
URL: http://www.activeparenting.com/~info/

Webster's International, Inc.: "The First Name in Parent Education"

The Bowdoin Method of Parent Education, published by Webster's International, Inc., is an award-winning parenting curriculum written by Ruth Bowdoin, regarded as a pioneer in the field of parent education. The parenting materials are divided into three programs: "Your Baby Talks To You" covers birth to age 3, Bowdoin Method I covers ages 3-7, and Bowdoin Method II covers ages 5-12. The materials are available in English or Spanish, and are intended primarily for organizations or individuals planning to conduct parenting workshops. Copies of individual booklets are also available for parents. A publications list is available upon request.

Contact:

Virginia Schmidt
Webster's International, Inc.
5729 Cloverland Place
Brentwood, TN 37027
Toll Free: 1-800/PARNT-ED
Fax: 1-615-373-1030

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Parent News for April, 1996

The PARENTING Calendar

CONFERENCE:
"A New Understanding of Parent Involvement: Family-Work-School"

Date: April 12-13, 1996

Place:
Teachers College, Columbia University
New York, NY

Description:
This conference is co-sponsored by Teachers College, *Working Mother* magazine, the Family Involvement Partnership for Learning; and the U.S. Department of Education. The conference addresses various issues related to parents' involvement with their children's education.

Contact:
Office of Continuing Professional Education
Teachers College, Columbia University
New York, NY
(212) 678-3987
FAX: (212) 678-4048

CONFERENCE:
"Family Literacy: Opportunities in the Midst of Change"

Date: April 21-23, 1996

Place:
Galt House Hotel
Louisville, Kentucky

Description:
This is the 5th annual national conference on family literacy presented by the National Center for Family Literacy.

Contact:
National Council for Family Literacy
Waterfront Plaza, Suite 200
325 West Main Street
Louisville, KY 40202-4251
(502) 584-1133

CONFERENCE:
"Changing the World, One Child at a Time"

Date: April 25-27, 1996

Place:
Adams Mark Hotel
St. Louis, Missouri

Description:

This is a national conference sponsored by the National School- Age Care Alliance.

Contact:
Bonnie Vento
Rockwood School District
1600 Vandover Road
Fenton, MO 63026
Phone: (314) 225-4494

CONFERENCE:
"Changing the Way America Works for Families"

Date: May 1-4, 1996

Place:
Chicago Marriott Downtown
540 North Michigan
Chicago, Illinois

Description:
This is a national conference sponsored by the Family Resource Coalition.

Contact:
Family Resource Coalition
200 South Michigan Avenue, 16th Floor
Chicago, IL 60604
Phone: (312) 341-0900
Fax: (312) 341-9361

CONFERENCE:
"Making A Difference for Children, Families, and Communities," Head Start's Third National Research Conference

Date: June 20-23, 1996

Place: Hyatt Regency Washington on Capitol Hill, Washington, DC

Description:
The conference aim is to help practitioners and policymakers gain a fuller understanding of early childhood and family research and its use in developing effective programming and policies. It is also intended to help researchers gain a deeper understanding of the critical problems facing families in poverty, and understand the needs of early intervention and family support programs.

Contact:
Columbia School of Public Health
(212) 304-5251

CONFERENCE:

"Infants, Toddlers, Parents: Supporting their Growth"

Date: June 26, 27, 28, 1996

Place: Bank Street College, 610 West 112 Street, New York City.

Description:

"Infants, Toddlers, Parents: Supporting their Growth" is presented by the Bank Street College Infancy Institute. The sessions will address the interests and concerns of those who serve infants, children, and their families in child care, parent support programs, teen parent programs, and early intervention programs.

Contact:
Dr. Nancy Balaban & Dr. Virginia Casper
Infant and Parent Development Program
Bank Street College Graduate School of Education
610 West 112 Street
New York, NY 10025
Phone: (212) 875-4713/4703
Fax: (212) 875-4753
Email: NBalaban@bnk1.bnkst.edu

CONFERENCE:
Parents Without Partners

Date: July 2-7, 1996

Place:
Hyatt Regency Dearborn, Dearborn, Michigan

Description:
Participants can take part in workshops and social activities designed for parents without partners.

Contact:
Parents Without Partners
401 North Michigan Avenue
Chicago, IL 60611
(312) 644-6610

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NPIN
National Parent Information Network

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Parent News for May, 1996

Family Resource Coalition Conference

On May 1-4, the Family Resource Coalition will hold its annual conference in Chicago. "Changing the Way America Works for Families" is the title of the conference, and one strand focuses on America's fathers. Vice-President Al Gore will lead a forum on fatherhood on the final day of the conference. Additional conference topics include: Collaborations, Partnerships, and Networks; Community Development; Cultural Democracy; Evaluation; Fathers; How-Tos for Community-Based Programs; Practice and Program Development; Public Policy, Advocacy, and Systems Reform; School-Linked Initiatives; Special Family Interests; Technology; and Training.

Conference participants will have the opportunity to take a three-hour tour of one of six diverse Chicago-area family support programs, and take part in special activities for parents. The conference allows participants to organize and network with others who share parenting concerns, such as the Family Resource Coalition's African American and Latino Caucuses.

Other featured conference speakers include Roger Rosenblatt, a nationally renowned essayist, who will share his observations of contemporary American families, and Audrey Rowe, the Executive Vice-President of the National Urban League.

> Note: NPIN Workshop
> Staff from the ERIC Clearinghouse on Elementary and Early Childhood Education will present a workshop on the "National Parent Information Network (NPIN): Parenting on the Information Superhighway." The workshop will be given on Friday, May 3, from 9:00 to 10:30 a.m. If you attend the conference, come and get acquainted!

This conference is being held in the Marriott Hotel in downtown Chicago. For more information about the conference, call the conference hotline at (312) 341-4743, ext. 888. The conference was announced in a previous NPIN Parent News.

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Parent News for May, 1996

Filtering Children's Internet Access

The April 12, 1996 issue of EDUCATION DAILY reports schools are beginning to use software that prevents students from accessing indecent material on the Internet and/or implement strategies to monitor access.

The following sites offer more information:

NetPartners Internet Solutions, Inc., offers products and services to help schools effectively use the Internet. http://www.netpart.com/

SafeSurf links to a parent group's rating standards. http://www.safesurf.com

NetNanny is a content-filter software program that blocks access to offensive sites identified by parents or school staff. http://www.netnanny.com/ netnanny/

Larry Magid's Child Safety Online links to companies developing parental control software and organizations that oppose censorship http:/ /www.omix.com/magid/child.safety.online.html

Platform for Internet Content Selection develops technology to control Internet access. http://www.w3.org/pub/WWW/P ICS

Although such programs can be effective for most children, parents and teachers are the best monitor of children's Internet use, because creative children may figure out ways to circumvent attempts to limit their access to Internet sites.

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Parent News for May, 1996

Concerns of School Principals

The National Association of Elementary School Principals (NAESP) recently conducted a poll of 802 elementary and middle school principals, in which they were asked to rate 24 issues according to their importance.

Of the 24 issues listed, the issues of greatest concern to the principals were:

- Motivating students (97%)
- Involving parents in their children's schoolwork (94%)
- Accomodating, and paying for, increasing numbers of special
- education children (93%)
- Keeping up with education technology (93%)

The issues of least concern to the principals were:

- Competing with private, for-profit companies (32%)
- Sharing decision-making authority with parents and community (50%)
- Handling pressures for school choice, tuition vouchers, and charter schools (45%)

Although principals' concerns paralleled those of teachers, they were significantly different from those expressed by the public in some other recent surveys, whose major concerns are charter schools, vouchers, and school choice.

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Parent News for May, 1996

Creativity and Science Summer Camp

This summer, Inventure Place, the National Inventors Hall of Fame is expanding its summer program "Camp Invention" to more than 500 locations across the country. "Camp Invention" is a one-week summer day-camp program run collaboratively with local schools. It offers children in grades 1-5 creativity and problem-solving experiences in science and invention.

To find out if "Camp Invention" will be offered in your area, contact:

JoAnn Uslick
Inventure Place
(800) 968-4332
http://www.invent.org

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Keeping Kids Safe from Accidental Poisoning

According to a recent article in *AAP News*, (Volume 12, Number 3), the number of children dying due to accidental poisoning has decreased, but the number of poisoning incidents is not decreasing. Far too many children are still having dangerous experiences with medications and household cleansers.

Approximately 20% of these incidents occur in grandparents' homes, where medications without child safety caps may be left in places small children can reach and, where safety locks are not used on cabinets.

Poison prevention stickers (Mr. Yuk) may be effective deterrents for older children who have the skills to understand the symbolic warning. However, with children under three years of age, the stickers may actually attract their attention, rather than acting as a deterrent.

Parents, grandparents, and caregivers can protect children by insisting on child safety caps on medications, installing safety locks on cabinets, and storing medications in locked cabinets.

When a child accidentally ingests a medication or cleanser, parents must call a poison control center first. Parents frequently call their pediatrician, but poison control centers are equipped to efficiently and quickly provide instructions.

Although poison control centers are second only to immunizations as a cost-effective public health service, budget cuts have resulted in the closing of some poison control centers.

Parents can find the appropriate poison control phone number for their geographical area inside the front cover of the telephone book. If one is not listed, parents should call 911.

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Parent News for May, 1996

Thank You, Teacher!

With the end of the school year approaching, many parents think about how they might thank teachers for a successful school year. Teachers would probably welcome most a simple letter or note expressing the ways in which their interactions with the child have been helpful.

Great Events Publishing Company offers a catalog of products specially designed to acknowledge teachers for the work they do all year long. Items include pens, pencils, bookmarks, buttons, and other gifts. The free catalog can be ordered by calling 1- 800-483-9235.

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American Legion Safe Kids Communities Program

The American Legion and the National Crime Prevention Council have developed a program designed to put self-protection information in the hands of children between the ages of 4 and 12. Children and their parents will receive the McGruff Safe Kids Identification Kit which includes a ten-page educational booklet of safety tips, and a child identification record with non-toxic fingerprint ink. The kit allows parents and children to discuss personal safety guidelines in positive and non-threatening ways.

The American Legion will organize community distribution of the kits. Parents not receiving a kit from their local American Legion post may order it by sending $1.50 to McGruff Safe Kids, P.O. Box 931, Wayzata, MN 55391.

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Parent News for May, 1996

VIRTUALLY REACT - A Teen Internet Magazine Gets Involved with Stand for Children

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Virtually React is an on-line magazine for teens. In addition to providing news, sports, and entertainment news, it provides the opportunity for teens to take part in surveys and Internet discussions.

Recently, the survey question asked if our country's leaders were doing enough for children. The response was a resounding NO. In a follow-up to the survey, Virtually React is asking teens to submit ideas and thoughts on how our leaders COULD better serve children in our country. Ideas submitted will be used for on-line discussions in the days prior to the Stand For Children rally to be held in Washington DC on June 1, 1996.

The web site address is: http://www.react.com

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Parent News for May, 1996

Helping Children Cope with Disaster

Many parts of the country have recently experienced natural disasters such as floods and tornadoes. The following article will prove useful to parents helping children cope with trauma in the days following a disaster. The following article, and a second one, titled "Helping Your Child Cope After A Tornado" are on NPIN, Resources for Parents.

HELPING YOUR CHILD COPE WITH A DISASTER

Disaster Resource
Cooperative Extension Service
Champaign County Extension Unit
1715 W. Springfield Avenue
Champaign, IL 61821
(217) 333-7672

It is normal for children to be afraid, especially with the uncertainty of a natural disaster like a flood, tornado or earthquake. The fear may last for an extended period of time and is best dealt with by kindness and understanding on the part of the parents. Children should be encouraged to talk about their feelings and otherwise express their fears through play, drawing, painting or clay/playdough. Research indicates that children's fears vary according to age, maturation and previous learning experiences. Four major fears common in children are: death, darkness, animals and abandonment. During a disaster, children could have encountered several of these fears. To help children cope with fears, one of the most important steps adults can take is to talk with children.

Following a disaster, some children may:

- Be upset at the loss of a favorite toy, blanket, teddy bear, etc.
- Be angry. They may hit, throw or kick to show their anger.
- Become more active and restless.
- Be afraid of the disaster recurring.
- Be afraid to be left alone or afraid to sleep alone. Children may want to sleep with a parent or another person. They may have nightmares.
- Behave as they did when younger. They may start sucking their thumb, wetting the bed, asking for a bottle, wanting to be held.
- Have symptoms of illness such as nausea, vomiting, headaches, fever or not wanting to eat.
- Be quiet and withdrawn, not wanting to talk about the experience.
- Become upset easily--crying and whining frequently.
- Feel guilty that they caused the disaster because of some previous behavior.
- Feel neglected by parents who are busy trying to clean up and rebuild their lives/homes.

- Refuse to go to school or their childcare provider. The child may not want to be out of the parent's sight.
- Become afraid of loud noises, rain or storms, or other reminders of the disaster.
- Not show any outward sign of being upset. Some children may never show distress because they do not feel upset. Other children may not give evidence of being upset until several weeks or months later.

What parents can do to help their children cope:

- Talk with your child, providing simple, accurate answers to their questions.
- Talk honestly with your child about your own feelings.
- Listen to what your child sats and how your child says it. Is there fear, anxiety or insecurity? Repeating the child's words may be very helpful, such as "You are afraid that..." or "You wonder if the flood will come again tonight." This helps both you and the child clarify feelings.
- Reassure your child. "We are together. We care about you. We will take care of you."
- You may need to repeat information and reassurances many times. Do not stop responding just because you told the child once or even a dozen times.
- Hold your child. Provide comfort. Touching is important for children during this period. Close contact helps assure children that you are there for them and will not abandon them.
- Spend extra time putting your child to bed. Talk and offer assurance. Leave a night light on if that makes the child feel more secure.
- Observe your child at play. Listen to what is said and how the child plays. Frequently children express feelings of fear or anger while playing with dolls, trucks or friends after a major disaster.
- Provide play experiences to relieve tension. Work with playdough, paint, blocks, etc. If children show a need to hit or kick, give them something safe like a pillow, ball or balloon. Allow a safe, open space for them to play if possible.
- If your child lost a meaningful toy or blanket, allow the child to mourn and grieve (by crying, perhaps). It is all part of helping the young child cope with feelings about the disaster. In time, it may be helpful to replace the lost object.
- Remember that children's fears may be intensified when adults discussing the topic with children. Many families ban all painful topics from the family conversation. To help children cope with fears, one of the most important steps adults can take is to share and make time to talk with children.
- If you need help for your child, contact a community resource such as your local Cooperative Extension Service office, mental health agency, Farm Resource Center Crisis Line or a minister. In Illinois, the phone number for the Farm Resource Center Crisis Line is 800-851-4719.

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Summaries/Reviews of Books for Parents

Naperstek, Nathan. 1995. *The Learning Solution: What to Do if Your Child Has Trouble with Schoolwork.* Dresden, TN: Avon Books. Available from: Avon Books, P.O. Box 767, Dresden, TN 38225 ($10). ISBN-0-380-77629-4

A learning problem exists when there is a discrepancy between people's expectations and a child's academic performance. Written for parents of children who may have learning problems, this book suggests alternative educational strategies for such children who do not have access to private tutoring. The book is intended to increase parents' knowledge about school resources along with the effectiveness of their interactions with school personnel. The book's chapters are: (1) "Common Learning Difficulties: What They Are and How They Affect School Progress," including a discussion of labels, the origin of learning difficulties, and common school difficulties; (2) "Public School Interventions: Their Effectiveness and How Parents Can Best Take Advantage of Them," explaining academic support services, special educational support services, alternatives to traditional intervention, and emotional support services; (3) "School Support Personnel: Making Use of Them"; (4) "Getting the Information You Need," on asking the right questions, using questionnaires, and getting a good psycho- educational evaluation; (5) "Tutoring Your Child At Home," including motivating techniques and preparation to be a tutor; and (6) "Specific Tutoring Strategies," focusing on relaxation exercises, behavior modification, compensatory strategies, and tutoring reading and mathematics. A section on resources and organizations is included, as is a listing of 35 suggested readings. Contains 18 references.

McIntire, Roger W. 1995. *Enjoy Successful Parenting: Practical Strategies You Can Use Today!* Columbia, MD: Summit Crossroads Press. Available from Summit Crossroads Press, 11065 Swansfield Road, Columbia, MD 21044-2709 ($14.95; 40% discount on 5-99 copies, 55% discount on 100 or more copies). ISBN-0-9640558-1-3

A child's best interest is served when parents enjoy and are satisfied with their family responsibilities. This book illustrates how children learn their communication styles, imitate their parents, and acquire and modify their own dispositions. So that the family may be enjoyed by everyone, children need good early social habits and a feeling they are making a contribution. Toward this end, the book offers specific positive strategies for solving daily problems and reaching long- term goals. Part 1, "Understanding What's Going On," describes how to observe a child's behavior, plan reactions, and place blame and give credit in problem situations. Part 2, "Sending the Right Messages," describes looking for and rewarding specific good behavior, sending positive messages, and creating child involvement that creates a family atmosphere. Part 3, "Making a Few Good Rules," discusses planning sessions for reasonable rules, incentives, types of punishment, and alternatives to punishment. Part 4, "Listening, Coaching, and Teaching," focuses on careful listening and communication to encourage good social habits and school skills. Part 5, "Bringing Principles and Parents Together," synthesizes the strategies presented in the book and suggests the usefulness of parent support groups.

Raising Our Future: Families, Schools, and Communities Joining Together. A National Resource Guide of Family Support and Education Programs for Parents, Educators, Community Leaders, and Policy Makers. 1995. Cambridge, MA: Harvard Family Research Project, Cambridge, MA. Available from: Harvard Family Research Project, 38 Concord Avenue, Cambridge, MA 02138 ($29.59, plus $6 shipping and handling).

Family support programs have been attracting increased attention, and are at the center of efforts to build systems of integrated, comprehensive, and preventive family-focused services. This handbook, developed by the Harvard Family Research Project (HFRP), profiles 73 school-affiliated family support and education programs in the United States to help principals, policy makers, program directors, evaluators, and teachers make decision regarding such programs. The handbook serves as a national

resource guide, describing the scope of programs currently implemented in schools serving families with young children. Following an overview that discusses major factors contributing to the success of these programs, the program descriptions are divided into the following chapters: (1) "Preschool and Early Childhood Programs with Parent Involvement"; (2) "Support for Special Needs Children and Their Parents"; (3) "Parent-School Partnerships for School Readiness and Enrichment"; (4) "Home Visits for Parenting Support"; (5) "School and Center-Based Parenting Support"; (6) "Teens, Parenthood, and Child Development"; (7) "Family Literacy and Intergenerational Skill Development"; (8) "Family Resource Centers"; and (9) "Family, School, Community Parternships." Each of the case studies includes demographic information, program philosophy, features, curriculum, site information, funding and staffing information, and evaluation efforts. A listing and description of 109 resources for information, advocacy, and research for family support programs is included.

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NETWorking: Other Gopher and WWW Sites to Visit

Name: Parents as Teachers National Center

Description:
The Parents as Teachers (PAT) National Center serves parent educators and parents of children from birth to age five. PAT uses a research-based curriculum, providing age-appropriate information to parents on child development and ways to encourage development and learning. PAT has been recognized by the United States Congress as an effective program for families and young children. The Parents as Teachers support system works with parents through personal visits and group meetings. PAT also provides child development, language, hearing and vision screenings. PAT programs are located in the United States, Australia, Canada, New Zealand, England, and the West Indies.

Address: http://www.cdmnet.com/sites/patnc/

Name: Educational Resources for Parents

Description:
This site links to 79 different sites of interest to parents, including: UNICEF; Parenting & Internet Filtering; Divorce and Family Law; SPECTRUM: The Family Internet Magazine; the National Parent Teacher Association; and Foster Parenting.

Address: http://earth. execpc.com/~dboals/parents.html

Name: Child Safety on the Information Highway

Description:
This site contains the full text of a brochure written by Lawrence Magid and produced by the National Center for Missing and Exploited Children, and the Interactive Services Association. It includes the following sections: Introduction; Benefits of the Information Highway; Putting the Issue in Perspective; What are the Risks?; How Parents can Reduce the Risks; Guidelines for Parents; and, My Rules for On-line Safety.

Address: http://www.4j.lane.edu/InternetResources/Safety/Safety.html

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Organizations of Interest to Parents

Association for Childhood Education International

The Association for Childhood Education International (ACEI) is a not-for-profit professional association whose purpose is to serve its members and society by disseminating authoritative information on education and child development; promote a sensitive and comprehensive perspective on chid development from birth through early adolescence; facilitate professional growth of educators; and focus public attention on the needs and rights of children in school, community, and home settings. ACEI publications include video and audio tapes as well as books, a professional journal, and position papers.

ACEI maintains a web site at http://www.udel.edu/educ/acei/. The section called "ACEI Speaks Brochures" contains a list of short items particularly for parents.

Contact:

Marilyn Gardner
Association for Childhood Education International
11501 Georgia Avenue, Suite 315
Wheaton, MD 20902
Phone: 301-942-2443
Toll Free: 800-423-3563
Fax: 301-942-3012
E-Mail: aceihq@aol.com

The Children's Foundation

Established in 1969, the Children's Foundation (CF) is a private, not for profit organization whose goal is to provide information for caregivers, children, families, and policy makers on issues of critical concern, such as affordable, high quality child care (especially family child care), federal food programs, health care, and enforcement of court-ordered child support at the national and local levels. CF also provides training to family day care providers and parents. Publications available in English or Spanish include a newsletter, training manuals, brochures and fact sheets.

Contact:

Kay Hollestelle
725 15th Street, NW #505
Washington, DC 20005-2109
Phone: 202-347-3300
Fax: 202-347-3382

Womens Educational Equity Resource Center

The Womens Educational Equity Act (WEEA) is a federal program dedicated to reducing educational

disparity for women and girls. The WEEA Resource Center disseminates quality materials and services at a reasonable cost to parents, educators, business leaders, and community members.

WEEA's 1996 catalog of gender-free materials is now available, and includes publications developed by WEEA field-based programs, ACI Publishing, the California Department of Education, Free Spirit Publishing, GrayMill Publishing, the Organization for Equal Education of the Sexes, and Seal Press.

Publications cover classroom practice, math and science education, school-to-work, violence prevention, teacher preparatin/professional develpoment, training resources, technology education, and students with disabilities.

To receive a catalog, contact:

Womens Educational Equity Act (WEEA)
Education Development Center
55 Chapel Street
Newton, MA 02158-1060
e-mail: weeapub@edc.org
http://www.edc.org/CEEC/WEEA

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The PARENTING Calendar

CONFERENCE: Parents Without Partners

Date: July 2-7, 1996

Place:
Hyatt Regency Dearborn, Dearborn, Michigan

Description:
The 37th annual international convention will include workshops, speakers, social activities, and an entertaining youth program.

Contact:
Parents Without Partners
401 North Michigan Avenue
Chicago, IL 60611
(312) 644-6610

CONFERENCE:
Media Education in a Violent Society A Five-Day Summer Institute for Educators, Parents, and Human Service Professionals

Date: July 8-12, 1996

Place:
Wheelock College, Boston, Massachusetts

Description:
This summer institute will examine the influence of the media in shaping our development, attitudes, behaviors and culture. Participants will also examine how homes and schools can work together to positively affect the media's role in shaping children's development, learning, and behavior. To request the brochure of summer course offerings, which includes information on this institute, call the number indicated below.

Contact:
Wheelock Graduate School
Wheelock College
200 The River Way
Boston, MA 02215
(617) 734-5200, ext. 195

CONFERENCE:
National Conference for Fathers and Children

Date: August 8-11, 1996

Place:
Holiday Inn Holidome, Kansas City, Kansas

Description:

This educational conference will focus on the needs of fathers; improving attorneys' representation for fathers; and second wives.

Contact:
National Conference for Fathers and Children 1-800-733-DADS

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Parent News for June, 1996

Television Violence

The April 1996 issue of *APA Monitor*, published by the American Psychological Association, included an article "TV displays violence without the mess," (p. 8) about television violence. For years, psychologists have maintained that the consequences of violence on the television screen are glossed over. A recent study supports that view. Researchers found that 58 percent of violent acts on TV go unpunished and depict no painful consequences, and that 47 percent of the violent acts show no harm at all to the victim.

The study, conceived by Senator Paul Simon, Illinois, found that children's programs are least likely to show the negative and harmful consequences of violent acts. Only 5 percent show any long-term consequences of violence, and two-thirds of children's programs depict violence as humorous.

The study, which was supported by the cable television industry, also found that 18 percent of programs on public broadcasting include violent acts, 44 percent of programs on broadcast networks include violent acts, and 85 percent of programs on premium cable channels include violent acts.

Researchers note that the results of this study may be useful for the television industry as it installs V-chips into new television sets.

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Deceptive Marketing Aimed at Children on the Internet

USA Today reported recently ("Kids' Internet site called a marketing tool," p. 1A, May 14th, 1996), that the Federal Trade Commission has been asked to investigate a site on the World Wide Web that may be using its site to collect marketing information on children.

The Center for Media Education has singled out SpectraCom's KidsCom site, claiming the site says it is an education and entertainment area for children between the ages of 4 and 15, but that its real purpose is to conduct market research on kids.

Mandatory registration is required to use the site, which claims to help match kids with e-mail pen pals around the world. About 30,000 children have registered and, according to *USA Today*, SpectraCom's Jorian Clark says registration is required to keep kids safe, not to develop marketing lists.

The FTC is investigating other sites suspected of on-line marketing to children, and plans a public meeting in early June on consumer and children's privacy on the Internet.

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*Read*Write*Now: Summer Reading Program*

Free kits of the Read*Write*Now Program sponsored by the United States Department of Education are now available. The program is designed as a summer challenge to improve the reading and writing skills of children pre-school through 6th grade. The kits include the booklet, "Activities for Reading and Writing Fun" in addition to "how to" materials, a vocabulary log, and certificates.

Available in English or Spanish, the kit can be requested by parents at their local library, or one can be ordered by calling 1-800-USA-LEARN.

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The Dark Side of Self Esteem

In a recent review of research, psychologists at Case Western Reserve University and the University of Virginia found evidence that school yard bullies, members of street gangs, tyrants, and terrorists have unrealistically high opinions of themselves, and that they use violence to maintain those opinions when chalienged by others.

Although it has been frequently thought that perpetrators of violence suffer from low self- esteem that may manifest itself in hidden self-doubts, researchers are recommending that high self-esteem, which may accompany the tendency to commit some violent acts, should receive more attention than has been the case so far.

The article ("High self-esteem can have a dark side, too", p. 7) discussing the research appeared in the March 1996 *APA Monitor* (American Psychological Association). The researchers conclude it may be more important to instill modesty and humility in children than an over-inflated sense of self.

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Preschool Sun Safety: Knowledge Doesn't Always Change Behavior

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With the approach of summer, parents and caregivers will need to be attentive to ways to protect their children from sunburn and heat exhaustion.

An article in *Day Care Information Service Newsletter* (August 7, 1995) reports that if you have taught your preschoolers about sun safety, you have probably increased their awareness but you probably have not instilled self-protective behavior. Four- to five-year-old children can understand the problem, but may not be able to act on what they've learned.

Researchers at the Arizona Cancer Center found that children offered a sun safety program scored higher on sun safety tests than those who did not take part in the program. However, although teachers taught children to cover their skin, find shade, and ask for sunsafe products, there was no significant difference between the groups in accurate application of their sun safety knowledge. The study, published in the *American Journal of Public Health* (Special Report 6/12/95) concluded that the children are not mature enough to apply the knowledge they have acquired.

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Achievement and High School Size

The April 23, 1996 issue of *Education Daily* included an article, "Study Links Achievement to High School Size" (p. 3) on a new study of high school size, which cited evidence to support an optimal school size of between 600 and 900 students. Students in high schools of this size appear to achieve the largest gains in math and reading, in comparison to smaller or larger schools. This study contradicts some previous research which suggested that the smaller the school, the more children learn.

In this study, the researchers suggested that small schools may not offer enough courses to stimulate slow or fast learners, and that larger schools may be too impersonal, not providing enough interaction between students, teachers and administrators.

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Summer Play: Playground Safety

A new brochure, "A Parent's Guide to Playground Safety" is available from the Association for Childhood Education International; it is available for 50 cents by contacting ACEI. The brochure identifies 19 common safety hazards on playgrounds, and includes suggestions on how to make playgrounds safer for children.

Association for Childhood Education International
11501 Georgia Avenue, Suite 315
Wheaton, MD 20902-0240

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Fall Meetings on Public School Successes

Concern over the public's declining confidence in our nation's public schools has prompted the National PTA, Phi Delta Kappa and the Center on National Education Policy to schedule community meetings which will focus on the positive aspects of public schools. Jack Jennings, director of the Center on National Education Policy, believes the public doesn't have all the information necessary to fairly judge our public schools. Most of the media attention on schools is focused on violent events and test scores.

Jennings points out in the May 3, 1996 issue of *Education Daily* ("Meetings Seek To Stir Support For Public Schools", p. 1) that children in public schools today take harder courses than ever before, and that the drop-out rate is declining. The meetings scheduled for the fall of 1996 will give school officials an opportunity to demonstrate what they are doing well, and to invite local taxpayers to provide input on what they would like to see improved.

For further information on the community meetings, contact:

Lowell Rose, Consultant
Phi Delta Kappa
P.O. Box 789
Bloomington, Indiana 47402
(800) 766-1156

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Resources for Grandparents Raising Grandchildren

"Grandparenting: Some Facts That You May Not Know" is a two page fact sheet containing recent statistics on issues related to grandparents who find themselves in the position of raising their grandchildren. A free copy of the fact sheet is available from:

Katrina W. Johnson
ATTENTION: Grandparents: Facts That You May Not Know
Behavioral and Social Research Program
National Institute on Aging
Gateway Building, Suite 533
Bethesda, MD 20892

"Grandparents Raising Grandchildren: A Guide to Finding Help and Hope" discusses the needs of grandchildren, the problems of the parents, and the legal and social issues confronting the grandparents. The booklet provides sources to turn to for help and support. It is available for $3.00 to cover postage and handling, from:

The National Foster Parent Association
9 Dartmoor Drive
Crystal Lake, IL 60014
(815) 455-2527

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Living with Grandma and Grandpa Drawing Contest

The American Association of Retired Persons (AARP), Grandparent Information Center (GIC), is holding an art contest. Children living with grandparents are invited to submit a drawing showing what it is like to live with grandparents. The winning drawing will be used on the cover of a book about children being raised by grandparents, written for professionals, researchers, policymakers, grandparents and grandchildren. Other drawings will be used throughout the book.

Drawings must be done in two colors (using crayons or markers) on a 8 1/2 x 11 sheet of white paper. On a separate sheet of paper, provide the grandchild's name, age, and a signed statement from the child's legal guardian giving the child permission to enter the GIC art contest, releasing AARP from liability concerns, and granting GIC the right to use the drawing in the book.

Mail the drawing to:
AARP Grandparent Information Center Art Contest
601 E Street NW
Washington DC 20049

Parent News Editor's Note: This contest ended in the summer of 1996.

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Results of Annual Survey of High Achieving Teens

The results of the *26th Annual Survey of High Achievers: Attitudes and Opinions from the Nation's High Achieving Teens* were recently released. The survey of 3,351 high achieving junior and high school teenagers, conducted by Who's Who Among American High School Students, reports the following:

- 58% of the students said it was easy to obtain test answers and questions;
- 47% said it was easy to obtain drugs;
- 53% said it was easy to obtain alcohol; and
- 19% said it was easy to acquire weapons at school.
- 76% of students admitted they had cheated in school;
- 76% said they would engage in sexual intercourse even if a condom was not available;
- 44% of sexually active students say they regularly do not use a contraceptive device;
- 85% of the sexually active students do not believe they are at even moderate risk for contracting AIDS.
- 45% of the high achieving males say they own or have access to a gun;
- 15% of students say their parents know they drink;
- 10% say their parents know they cheat in school;
- 29% say they know someone who has allegedly been the victim of a date-rape; and
- 11% of females report being sexually assaulted in some manner.

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NIKE Funding for Youth Programs

The NIKE Participate in the Lives of America's Youth (P.L.A.Y.) Foundation provides funding to schools, community-based organizations, and other non-profit groups to develop sports and recreation programs. These programs are intended to provide meaningful opportunities for youth to learn about self-esteem, discipline, teamwork, and sportsmanship, while also providing them with an alterative to violence and drug use.

There is no deadline for applying for the funds. For more information, interested community parenting groups can contact:

NIKE P.L.A.Y. Foundation
Public Affairs Department
NIKE Inc.
1 Bowerman Drive
Beaverton, Oregon 97005
(503) 671-6453

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Summaries/Reviews of Books for Parents

This month some books for both parents and those who work with parents are summarized.

Books for Parents

Straus, Murray A.; Donnelly, Denise A. 1994. *Beating the Devil Out of Them: Corporal Punishment in American Families.* Available From: Lexington Books/Jossey-Bass, Inc., Publishers, 350 Sansome Street, San Francisco, CA 94104 ($24.95). ISBN-0-02-931730-4.

The question of whether corporal punishment is an effective method of discipline has been hotly debated by parents, teachers, and child-rearing experts. Based on studies of over 9,000 families, this book describes the extent to which parents in the United States use corporal punishment (such as spanking and slapping) and its effects on their children. Distinguishing corporal punishment from child abuse as physical punishment not intended to cause injury, the book contends that this believed to be "minor" form of physical violence is the precursor to much of the violence exhibited in our world, and that children who are spanked learn quickly that love and violence can go hand in hand and that hitting is morally right. The book explores two decades of research--including cultural, gender, and socioeconomic factors-- indicating that children who are spanked regularly are from two to six times more likely to be physically aggressive, to become juvenile delinquents, and later as adults, to use physical violence against their spouses, exhibit sadomasochistic tendencies, and to suffer from depression. The chapters of the book are: (1) "[Spanking] The Conspiracy of Silence"; (2) Everyone Does It, But Less Now"; (3) "Hitting Adolescents"; (4) "Who Spanks the Most?"; (5) "Depression and Suicide"; (6) "Physical Abuse"; (7) "Violence and Crime"; (8) "The Fusion of Sex and Violence"; (9) "Alienation and Reduced Income"; (10) "Ten Myths that Perpetuate Corporal Punishment"; (11) "Social Evolution and Corporal Punishment. Four appendices include a theoretical model of causes and effects of corporal punishment, and books on child abuse searched for discussions of corporal punishment.

Takas, Marianne. 1995. *Grandparents Raising Grandchildren: A Guide to Finding Help and Hope.* Available From: National Foster Parent Association, Inc., 9 Dartman Drive, Crystal Lake, IL 60014 ($3 for first copy, $1 each additional copy.)

Intended as a practical guide for grandparents raising their grandchildren, this book contains information and ideas about meeting grandchildren's needs and vignettes describing the coping strategies of many grandparents. The book consists of five chapters. Chapter 1, "Finding Help, Growing in Hope," describes reasons for grandparents raising their grandchildren, discusses normal feelings of anger, sadness, and stress, and provides information about the Grandparent Information Center operated by the American Association of Retired Persons. Chapter 2, "If Your Grandchild Was Abused, Neglected, or Abandoned," discusses the role of child welfare agencies in a question-answer format. Chapter 3, "Getting Help with Expenses," looks at government programs which may help to provide support for grandchildren, including Aid to Families with Dependent Children (AFDC), Medicaid, food stamps, the Earned Income Tax Credit (EIC), Supplemental Security Income (SSI), and special needs adoption subsidies. Chapter 4, "Getting Help from the Legal System," explains the legal process and what it can and cannot do for grandparents raising their grandchildren, including custody and child support issues. Chapter 5, "Meeting Your Grandchild's Needs," describes benefits and services to which grandchildren may be entitled, discusses common problems, and suggests how other grandparents have coped.

Books for Family Support Personnel

Brown, Janet, Comp.; And Others. 1994. *Men and Their Families: Contributions of*

Caribbean Men to Family Life. A Discussion Guide for Use by Groups in Church, School, Community and Other Settings. Kingston, Jamaica: University of the West Indies, Kingston (Jamaica). School of Continuing Studies. PS 023633

The Carribean Child Development Centre conducted a 2-year research project to provide a socio-historical perspective on roles of Caribbean men within the family, and to survey and describe attitudes and behaviors of a cross-section of men in Jamaica. An 8-week series of discussions, designed for a maximum of 15 men and 15 women, was organized to cover the topics of the research. Among the findings of the survey and discussions were that men contribute more to family life than is credited, and that being a father has strong personal meanings for men. A result of the research project, this discussion guide for groups concerning parenting skills is designed to help men and women become better parents, to shape children from infancy into valued and responsible adults. Although it focuses on men's roles, the guide is written for use by both men and women. The eight workshop sessions outlined are: (1) "The Families We Come From"; (2) "The Families We Create"; (3) "Domestic Roles Within the Family"; (4) "Peer Influences on Family Roles"; (5) "Relationships with Our Children"; (6) "Factors Which Influence Personality Development"; (7) "Sexuality and the Family"; and (8) "Putting It All Together." Guidelines for workshop facilitators are included. (BGC)

Foley, Christina A. 1995. *The Big Red How-To-Guide: Planning a Health Fair for Children and Families.* Available From: National Health and Education Consortium, Institute for Educational Leadership, 1001 Connecticut Avenue, N.W., Suite 310, Washington, DC 20036 ($15). ISBN-0-937846-35X

Community health fairs usually focus on adult health issues and seldom on child and family health or the link between health and education. This guide's purpose is to assist communities in developing child and family-focused health fairs. The guide is divided into two major sections: pre-planning and planning. The pre-planning section covers steps that must be taken before planning a community health fair, covering aspects such as community assessment, community task force, target audience, mission statement, and timeline. The planning section includes a discussion of (1) financing; (2) logistics, such as exhibitors, participants, fair location, and volunteers; (3) promotion, including advertising via newspaper, radio public service announcements, and community calendars; and (4) evaluation, including a sample evaluation form. A summary of a health fair project sponsored by the Eastern Shore Rural Health System (Onancock, Virginia) is provided as an example. The guide concludes with an overview of the National Health and Education Consortium's (NHEC) history and current goals.

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Notable Newsletters

PARENT AND PRESCHOOLER (Pp) NEWSLETTER

Parent and Preschooler (Pp) Newsletter is a monthly exploration of early childhood topics. In its 11th year of publication, each issue focuses on a specific theme, and serves as an international resource for professionals and parents. Past themes have included topics such as "Kids and Computers," "Teaching Creativity," and "Social Skills." A one-year subscription of the English version is $28; the English/Spanish version is $38.

Contact:

Preschool Publications, Inc.
P.O. Box 1167
Cutchogue, NY 11935-0888
(800) 726-1708
Fax: (516) 765-4927

RESOURCES FOR FAMILY DEVELOPMENT - YOUR LINK TO CHILD CARE SERVICES

Resources for Family Development publishes this newsletter ten times a year. The May 1996 issue featured articles on the difficulties parents experience when they try to locate part-time child care, how parents can limit television viewing time, and how to encourage children to eat five servings of fruits and vegetables a day.

The newsletter subscription is $6 a year, and may be ordered by contacting:

Rhonda Cardwell
1520 Catalina Court
Livermore, CA 94550
(510) 455-5111

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Networking: Other Gopher and Www Sites to Visit

Name: Family Village

Description: This site provides information, resources, and communication opportunities for parents of children with cognitive and other disabilities. It includes a library about specific diseases (arranged alphabetically), with supporting organizations, mailing lists, full text articles and bibliographies of web sites related to each disease. It also includes the Post Office and the Coffee Shop which provide contact information for families to reach out to other families in similar positions, and a Shopping Mall which lists businesses supplying specific items of interest to individuals with disabilities.

Address: http://www.familyvillage.wisc.edu

Name: 4MY-TEEN

Description: 4MY TEEN is a teen drivers monitoring service available to parents and teens committed to safe driving. Parents and teens interested in the program register the vehicle the teen will be driving with 4MY-TEEN. A bumper sticker will be provided, directing others to call 1-800-4MY-TEEN to report unsafe driving or compliment safe driving. The reports are forwarded to the parents.

Address: http://www.4myteen.org/teen

Name: The Incredible Art Department

Description: This site includes art activities in lesson format that teachers and parents can use with children. The lessons are divided into several levels including elementary through high school and beyond. The lessons at the elementary school level are an integrated art and drama study of Italian Renaissance Art, Impressionism, and Post-Impressionism. The site also includes gallery's of work submitted by children, art "pet peeves" and related inspirational stories, and an on-line newsletter devoted to art news appearing in newspapers across the country.

Address: http://www.in.net/~kenroar/index.html

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Organizations of Interest to Parents

NATIONAL ORGANIZATION OF SINGLE MOTHERS, INC.

The National Organization of Single Mothers, Inc., (NOSM) is a not-for-profit network committed to helping single parents meet the challenges of daily life with wisdom, wit, dignity, confidence and courage. NOSM seeks to unite single parents and their families primarily through its bimonthly newsletter, "SingleMOTHER". Membership in the organization costs $12.97, and also includes a one-year subscription to the newsletter.

In addition to an "Ask the Experts" column, the newsletter features articles covering parenting concerns with a specific focus on how single parents cope with the problems.

Single mothers interested in establishing a community support group can receive assistance from NOSM including guides on how to develop the support group, and a list of other members of NOSM currently living in the community area.

National Organization of Single Mothers, Inc.
P.O. Box 68
Midland, North Carolina 28107
(704) 888-KIDS
Fax: (704) 888-1752
Email: SOLOMOTHER@AOL.COM

ASSOCIATION FOR SPECIAL KIDS, INC. (A.S.K.)

A.S.K is a financial planning organization dedicated to helping parents of children with disabilities to protect their children's future. Counselors work individually with parents, and with a network of qualified attorneys and accountants to set parents' plans into action. There is no fee for these services; most of the counselors are also parents of children with disabilities.

Contact: Association for Special Kids, Inc.
107 West Hill Street
Baltimore, Maryland 21230
(800)-832-0467.

CHILDREN'S HOSPICE INTERNATIONAL

Children's Hospice International is a nonprofit organization, providing medical, psychological, emotional and spiritual support to seriously ill children and their families, as well as to families recovering from the loss of a child. A newsletter and publications are available to members of CHI.

Contact:

Children's Hospice International
2202 Mt. Vernon Avenue, Suite 3C
Alexandra, VA 22301
Telephone: (703) 684-0330
Toll Free: (800) 24-CHILD
Fax: (703) 684-0226

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The Parenting Calendar

CONFERENCE: Celebrating Children: A Century of Commitment to Children. National PTA Annual Convention

Date:
June 22-25th, 1996

Place:
Washington Hilton Towers, Washington, DC

Description:
This is the 100th anniversary of the National PTA. The convention will serve as a kick off for a nine month schedule of events commemorating the past, celebrating the present, and commiting to another century of serving children.

Contact:
National PTA
330 N. Wabash Avenue, #2100
Chicago, IL 60611-3690
(312) 670-6782

CONFERENCE: The 1996 International Alternative Schools Conference

Date:
June 28-30, 1996

Place:
Lewis & Clark College, Portland, OR

Description:
Sponsored this year by the Oregon Association for Alternatives in Education and the Washington Association for Learning Alternatives, the theme of this year's conference is Telling the Story: A Festival Celebrating the Story of Educational Alternatives and Recognizing Story-telling as Education and Art.

Contact:
Washington Association for Learning Alternatives
P.O. Box 73
Greenbank, WA 98253-0073.

CONFERENCE: The Unschoolers Network 1996 Conference and Curriculum Fair

Date:
June 29, 1996

Place:
Brookdale Community College, Lincroft, NJ

Description:
Keynote speakers will be David and Mickey Colfax, who abandoned their careers as college professors in favor of homeschooling their children, three of whom have gone on to Harvard.

Contact:
Unschoolers Network
2 Smith Street
Farmingdale, NJ 07727
(908) 938-2473.

CONFERENCE: California Home Education Conference

Date:
August 24-25, 1996

Place:
Radisson Hotel, Sacramento, California

Description:
This is the second of two conferences sponsored by the Home School Association of California.

Contact:
David & David Enterprises
P.O. Box 231324
Sacramento, CA 95823-0405
(916) 391-4942
Email: CHEC95@aol.com

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National Parent Information Network

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Artwork by Andrea Shields.
Send comments to NPIN Webmaster.

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State-by-State Comparison of Child Care

Over the past three years, *Working Mother* magazine has reported on its state-by-state evaluation of child care, and the results of the 1996 survey are in the June 1996 issue (pp. 18-39). *Working Mother* compiled its analysis with the aid of a panel of experts from the following major organizations concerned with early care and education:

- Children's Defense Fund
- Wheelock College
- Families and Work Institute
- National Black Child Development Institute
- Child Care Action Campaign
- School-Age Child Care Project at the Center for Research on Women at Wellesley College
- National Association of Child Care Resource and Referral Agencies
- National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC)
- American Academy of Pediatrics
- National Center for Education in Maternal and Child Health
- U.S. Public Health Service

With the help of these organizations, the magazine compiled the following list of criteria to be used to evaluate child care:

Quality. Standards for adult/child ratios set by NAEYC and the National School-Age Care Alliance were used to evaluate programs: 3 to 4 infants to each adult; 4 to 6 toddlers to each adult; 7 to 10 preschoolers to each adult; 8 to 10 children under 6 years of age to each adult; and 10 to 15 children 6 years and older to each adult. Based on the adult to child standards, programs were rated as either good, mediocre to poor, or as having no standards. Programs were also evaluated by determining the amount of education/training each state requires of child care workers.

Safety. The adult/child ratios specified above were used to rate safety of programs because these ratios contribute to a safe environment for children. Other safety features examined were immunization requirements, playground surfaces, hand-washing, and state inspection of the site.

Availability. This criterion is related to efforts the state makes to create more child care options for parents and whether or not the state maintains resource and referral agencies.

Commitment. The final category is based on the priority each state gives to child care, particularly actions of the state governor and lawmakers. The **ten best states** identified by the above criteria in this study are:

1. California
2. Colorado
3. Connecticut
4. Hawaii
5. Maryland
6. Massachusetts
7. Minnesota
8. Vermont
9. Washington
10. Wisconsin

(Source: "Child Care: How Does Your State Rate?" *Working Mother*, June 1996, pp. 18-39.)

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UPDATE: Stand for Children Rally

The national Stand for Children rally was held at the Lincoln Memorial in Washington, D.C. on June 1st, 1996 (refer to the April 1996 Parent News for background information).

The rally was attended by approximately 250,000 people from across the country. Participants traveled to Washington in private cars, chartered busses, trains, and airplanes.

Stand for Children is maintaining a Web site that includes the speech delivered by Marian Wright Edelman and photographs taken at the rally. Comments from participants, stating why they chose to be at the rally to Stand for Children are also included.

The Website includes a Citizens Action Guide which individuals can visit to continue to Stand for Children. The guide includes factoids on the status of children in the United States, lists ways individuals can take action in their personal lives to Stand for Children, where to go for resources to help children, and examples of what businesses and communities can do to help our children.

The address is: http://www.stand.org/.

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Effects of Child Care on the Mother-Child Bond

Concern about the effects of infant child care has grown in recent years as increasing numbers of babies are left with caregivers other than parents for long hours every day. Research has consistently shown that early infancy experiences that prevent the development of a secure pattern of attachment to the primary caregiver (usually a parent), may be associated with later disturbances in mental health. Attachment is a term in developmental psychology that describes the emotional bond formed between an infant and an adult, usually a parent or caregiver. This attachment provides a sense of security to infants that allows them to explore and return to the adult during periods of distress, such as during the "strange situation" test in which a stranger enters the infant's proximity.

Researchers have been concerned for years that spending a significant amount of time in child care in infancy could disrupt a child's natural attachment to his or her primary caregiver. Some new research from the National Institute on Child Health and Human Development (NICHD) should be reassuring to parents whose infants spend a portion of their day in child care. NICHD recently conducted a study of 1300 families, following the children from infancy through age 7. In this extensive study on child care and its effects on attachment, researchers observed children in the home and in child care settings.

Among the research findings are the following:

- Infants in low-quality care or infants who had several different caregivers were more likely to develop poor attachments if their mothers were also unresponsive to their needs. These children had the highest rates of insecurity.
- The age of entry into child care, the frequency of care, and the amount of time in child care were not the sole determinants of children's attachment to their mothers.

What does this mean? Prior studies on infant attachment and child care looked only at the child, and found that infants who spent 20 or more hours per week in child care developed insecure attachments more often than those children spending less time in child care. Because this new research included observation of the family setting, it was possible to determine that child care ALONE is not responsible for positive or negative attachment. Both the child care environment AND maternal home care must be considered when studying the mother-child bond. The evidence from this study supports the position that merely being in child care for 20 or more hours each week will not adversely affect an infant's ability to bond with his or her mother.

(Source: "Mother-Child Bond Not Hurt By Child Care, Study Says," *Report on Preschool Programs*, May 1, 1996, p. 66.)

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Annenberg Public Policy Center Survey on Parents, Children, and Television

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The Annenberg Public Policy Center of the University of Pennsylvania recently released a report on a survey of 1,205 parents, called the "First Annual Annenberg Parents, Children, and Television Survey." Researchers found that 77% of parents of preschool children do not think their children watch too much television, and 57% believe that television has done their children more good than harm.

Parents' perceptions change as their children get older, however. Parents of older children (ages 6 to 11) believe that programming for children in this age group takes a downward turn, with fewer high quality programs available.

Kathleen Hall Jamieson, head of the Annenberg Public Policy Center, says young children develop the TV habit by watching high quality programs such as Sesame Street, but similar high quality programs are not available for older children.

(Source: USA Today, Tuesday, June 18, 1996, Section 3D: Television)

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Self Confidence: Effects on School Achievement

According to the results of a new study, children who want to learn AND have confidence in their ability to do well in school experience greater academic success. The study revealed a decline in mathematics and social studies grades of capable students who believe that

(1) they do not have the ability to do well in school, or
(2) do not have the desire to do well.

Researchers interviewed third and fourth grade students, and found that students who were more confident of their abilities were more curious about school activities, participated more frequently, and reported greater enjoyment from them than did students who were less confident in their abilities.

Teachers and parents must not assume that capable students earning high grades are not susceptible to problems of low self esteem. These children, as well as those who are failing or at risk for dropping out of school, need encouragement and recognition from teachers and parents.

(Source: Press release from the APA Journals, Public Affairs Office, 750 First Street, NE, Washington, DC 20002-4242.)

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Help for Connecting with the Internet

The American Association of School Librarians has developed a program to help parents learn the skills needed to "cruise the information superhighway." The program is called ICONnect, and includes the following components:

- ICONnect's Gopher and Home Page
- Online courses on how to use the Internet
- Internet curriculum advisors
- Mini-grants for curriculum projects that use the Internet as an information resource
- KidsConnect!, a question/answer referral service for children on the Internet.

Contact:
ICONnect
1-800-545-2433, ext. 1390
E-mail: ICONnect@ala.org

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Cleaning Computers after Visits by Sticky Fingers

More and more parents are purchasing software programs and CD-ROMS for young children to use on home computers. Because young children's fingers are often sticky and dirty, the computer components may need occasional cleaning. A recent article by Daniel D. Shade, which appeared in *Early Childhood Education Journal* (Vol. 23, no. 3, p. 165-168) offers these cleaning suggestions:

1. Before starting, unplug all the components from the power source.

2. Clean the computer monitor screen with a foam type window cleaner from the grocery store. Be sure to use a soft, lint-free rag instead of paper towels, which will scratch the screen. Apply the cleaner to the rag itself, not the screen. Then, wipe carefully. **DO NOT USE WINDOW CLEANER ON GLARE FILTERS.** They must be cleaned with the special bottle of cleanser that was packaged with the filter.

3. Clean the keyboard and other surfaces with a brand of spray-on cleanser that has the least suds. Using a soft rag, apply the cleanser to the rag, and then wipe the surfaces, being careful not to get the rag so wet that cleanser drips down between keys. Hard to reach places on the keyboard may be cleaned with a cotton swab dampened with the cleanser.

4. Clean the mousepad with the spray-on cleanser applied to a soft rag.

5. The inside of the mouse, disk drives, and CD-ROM drives require specialty items to clean them, which can be purchased at a computer store. Purchasing them through a mail order catalog is often cheaper.

(Source: *Early Childhood Education Journal*, Vol. 23, no. 3, 1996)

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DO-IT: A Scholars Program for Disabled High School Students

The University of Washington and the National Science Foundation offer a program called DO-IT in which disabled high school students (sophomores, juniors and seniors) learn to use computers and communicate over the Internet as they explore their interests in science, engineering, or mathematics as career options. The students receive mentoring and work with scientists, engineers, and faculty, many of whom also are disabled.

The program runs for two weeks during August and is open to students across the country. At no cost to participants, students are housed at the University of Washington dormitories, attend classes in the morning, and take field trips in the afternoon. For an application to the August 1997 program, contact information is provided below:

Contact:
DO-IT
University of Washington
4515 15th Avenue, NE
Room 206
Seattle, WA 98105-4527
(206) 685-DOIT
FAX: (206) 685-4045
EMail: doit@u.washington.edu

(Source: "DO-IT! Scholars Program Applications Available," *Exceptional Parent*, February 1996, p. 52.)

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Parent News for July 1996

Videos in Child Care Settings

Caregivers providing child care should be aware of the legal issues surrounding the practice of showing entertainment videos to children under their care. Although the FBI warning against showing videos in public is on each video, many caregivers do not realize that showing a video to children under their care is a violation of the law. The law applies equally to care provided in the provider's home or day care center, as well as private or non- profit organizations. To comply with the law, providers may apply for a public exhibition license from the Motion Picture Licensing Corporation (MPLC). Licenses cost between $75 and $175, depending on the site and number of children served. Fines for violating the law range from $150 to $10,000 per violation. Violators are usually reported by parents who do not want their child to view entertainment videos in their child care setting.

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Free Braille Publication

An annual anthology of children's literature, and a 1996-1997 calendar in Braille and large print are available at no cost. The anthology includes stories for children in grades 3-6. The book contains color illustrations with raised edges, and a scratch-and-sniff page.

Contact:
Braille Institute Sight Center
Communications Department
741 N. Vermont Avenue
Los Angeles, CA 90029
(213) 663-1111, ext. 371

(Source: "Free Braille Publication," *Exceptional Parent*, February 1996, p. 52.)

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Database of Assistive Technology and Rehabilitation Equipment

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ABLEDATA is a database of assistive technology and rehabilitation equipment for people with physical, cognitive, or sensory disabilities. ABLEDATA contains information on more than 20,000 different products for people of all ages.

Contact:
ABLEDATA
8455 Colesville Road, Suite 935
Silver Spring, MD 20910-3319
(800) 227-0216
(301) 588-9284
FAX: (301) 587-1967

(Source: *Exceptional Parent*, February 1996, p. 55.)

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Motivating Students: Free Brochure

A brochure titled "50 Simple Things You Can Do" contains specific actions to help students strive for educational excellence. The brochure is part of the "Keep the Promise" campaign sponsored by the U.S. Department of Education, the Business Roundtable, the National Governors' Association, the American Federation of Teachers, and the National Alliance of Business, and can be used by parents, employers, school officials, and other concerned citizens. To order the brochure, call 1-800-96-PROMISE.

(Source: "Resources," *Community Education Today*, Volume XXIII, Number 3, March 1996, p. 8.)

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Summertime Funtime Activities

The U.S. Department of Education's Office of Educational Research and Improvement (OERI) put together a calendar of more activities parents can do with their children over the summer months. The calendar of activities which is available from the National Library of Education (while the supply lasts) can be ordered by calling 1-800-424-1616.

All 65 activities on the "Summertime Funtime Activities" calendar are reproduced below (one for each weekday, Monday through Friday). These activities are **in the public domain,** which means they may be used in your own newsletters or publications (with credit to the U.S. Department of Education's Office of Educational Research & Improvement, which produced the calendar).

JUNE

June 3 Make a poster of summer safety tips with your child.
June 4 Share family history, photos with your child.
June 5 Watch an educational television show with your child and discuss it.
June 6 Pick up a library reading list appropriate for your child's age and help your child get a library card.
June 7 Count the number of steps it takes to walk to the corner with your child.

June 10 Read a newspaper article about the environment with your child.
June 11 Have your child look for bugs. How many different kinds of bugs can he or she find? Size? Color?
June 12 Have your child list all uses of math around the house.
June 13 Cut pieces of paper into shapes and paste them in a quilt pattern with your child.
June 14 Cook dinner with your child and show him or her the do's and don'ts of preparing food.

June 17 Make up a board game with your child.
June 18 Have your child tell you a favorite story.
June 19 Have your child put an ice cube outside. How long until it melts? Until it evaporates?
June 20 Look up events on the day your child was born.
June 21 Take your child on a field trip.

June 24 Make finger puppets with your child. Cut the ends off the fingers of old gloves. Draw faces on the fingers with felt tip markers, and glue on yarn for hair.
June 25 Help your child find your town on a map.
June 26 Teach your child a new skill like setting the table.
June 27 Ask your child to watch for numbers in TV programs and commercials.
June 28 On trips, make a game of measuring distances and times.

JULY

July 1 Encourage your child to check out 2 books this month from the library.
July 2 Write a list of your child's favorite animals. Talk about what makes each animal special.
July 3 Include your child in preparing a healthy meal.

July 4 Explain the origins of holidays, such as Independence Day.
July 5 Ask your child to write a thank you note or write a note to a relative or friend.

July 8 Ask your child to watch the moon & record changes in size and color.
July 9 Have your child decorate a shoe box to store treasures.
July 10 Talk to your child about fire safety. Discuss a fire escape route and have a mock fire drill.
July 11 Make a grocery list that fits within a budget with your child.
July 12 Learn a tongue twister with your child.

July 15 Talk to your child about avoiding strangers.
July 16 Hide a treasure with your child and draw a map to find it.
July 17 Practice printing or handwriting with your child. Make a certificate for a job well done.
July 18 Take a walk or bike ride with your child.
July 19 Discover when things were invented with your child. Make a timeline.

July 22 Have your child swap favorite books with a friend.
July 23 Tell a story. Ask your child to tell it back to you.
July 24 Ask your child to make a collage from things found around the house -- ribbons, string, buttons, pebbles.
July 25 Show your child how and when to dial 911.
July 26 Take your child to the grocery store. Talk about prices and weights of food.

July 29 Make a wish list of places you would like to visit with your child. Look them up on a map.
July 30 Make a personalized bookmark with your child.
July 31 Read a poem aloud with your child.

AUGUST

August 1 Ask your child to study town history from old newspapers.
August 2 Make fingerpaints with soap flakes, water and food coloring with your child.

August 5 Tell your child a story about looking both ways before crossing the street.
August 6 Ask your child to organize the coins in a coin jar.
August 7 Find and use a computer with your child.
August 8 Look for community service activities that can include your child.
August 9 Have your child read a story with a friend or sibling.

August 12 Have your child talk with a person from another state or country.
August 13 Cut a snack, such as an apple or orange, into equal parts and talk about fractions with your child.
August 14 Turn off the TV for family reading time.
August 15 Compare history as presented on TV and in reference books with your child.
August 16 Have your child read your recipes to you.

August 19 Take your child to the park or playground.
August 20 Have your child find 3 jobs in the classifieds that interest him or her and discuss them.
August 21 Ask your child what being responsible means to him or her.
August 22 Measure objects in a room with your child. Make a floor plan.
August 23 Read about your state bird and state flower with your child.

August 26 Visit the library for a special children's program.
August 27 Help your child organize his or her own library.
August 28 Have your child be a pet detective and observe an animal.
August 29 String a macaroni necklace with your child. Have him or her count the pieces of macaroni.

August 30 Make a time capsule with your child and save it for a year or two.

EVERY DAY

- Give your child a hug & say "I love you."
- Praise your child.
- Talk with your child.
- Read & write with your child for at least 30 minutes.
- With your child, make a dictionary of new words & add to it.
- Count with your child.
- Share news with your child.
- Listen to music with your child.

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Summaries/Reviews of Books for Parents

Carpenter, Kathryn Hammell. 1995. *Sourcebook on Parenting and Child Care.* Phoenix, AZ: The Oryx Press. Available from: Oryx Press, 4041 North Central and Indian School Road, Phoenix, AZ 85012-3397 ($35). 270 p. ISBN-0-89774-780-1.

Intended as a guide to parenting materials for parents and professionals who work with parents, this sourcebook and annotated bibliography of 940 entries is divided into five parts. Topical chapters in each part list and describe books and journals categorized as popular titles, professional titles, and directories. Chapters in part 1 list and describe materials that introduce parenting concepts including mothering, fathering, and the humorous side of parenting. Chapters in part 2, "Parenting in the Context of Family Life," list materials on new families, celebrating family diversity, adoptive families, and child care. Chapters in part 3, "Daily Care According to Age," list and annotate materials on infants and newborns, toddlers and preschoolers, school-age children, and adolescents. Chapters in part 4, Growth and Development," list materials on child development norms; developmental disabilities; physical disabilities; psychological development; health care, safety and death; and nutrition and fitness. Chapters in part 5, "The Parents' Responsibilities," list materials on discipline and guidance; education and learning; special and gifted education needs; play, TV, and recreation; and religious training. Chapters in Part 6, "Children in Crisis," catalog materials for parents on child abuse and substance abuse. Part 7, "Reference Tools," lists and describes print and nonprint reference materials. Appendices listing popular and professional videotapes and statistical data are included, as are author, title, and subject indexes.

Essa, Eva. 1995. *A Practical Guide to Solving Preschool Behavior Problems.* Third Edition. Florence, KY: Delmar Publishers. Available from: Delmar Publishers, 7625 Empire Drive, Florence, KY 41042 (Individual orders, $23; Educational orders, $17.80). 400 p. ISBN-0-8273-5812-1.

Focusing attention on possible underlying causes of a child's misbehavior, this guide uses a situational approach for solving specific behavior problems that commonly occur with young children. Each behavior is discussed in a separate chapter, with step-by-step recommendations provided to correct the problem. The book encourages readers to consider the influences of developmental, environmental, and health factors on children's behavior. The chapters are grouped in sections as follows:

1. "Overview," including setting a positive environment to encourage appropriate behavior, and why children misbehave;
2. "Aggressive and Antisocial Behaviors," including hitting, biting, stealing, and noncompliance;
3. "Disruptive Behaviors," including running aimlessly around the classroom, shouting in the classroom, and dropping objects to create noise;
4. "Destructive Behaviors," including breaking toys, flushing objects down the toilet, and destroying the work of others;
5. "Emotional and Dependent Behaviors," including tantrums, baby talk, clinging, whining, and seeking attention;
6. "Participation in Social and School Activities," including nonparticipation, shyness, and infrequent large-muscle activity; and
7. "Eating Behaviors," including finicky eating and overeating. The final two chapters cover dealing with multiple problem behaviors, and record keeping.

Karnofsky, Florence; Weiss, Trudy. 1993. *How to Prepare Your Child for Kindergarten.*

Carthage, IL: Fearon Teacher Aids. Available from: Fearon Teacher Aids, P.O. Box 280, Carthage, IL 62321 (Catalog No. FE-0932). ISBN-0-86653-932-8.

Intended as a guide to help parents teach their children the skills needed to make kindergarten a positive experience, this book consists of an introduction and seven chapters on various aspects of preparing young children for kindergarten. Checklists for parents are included in each chapter. The Introduction discusses what parents need to know about themselves and about kindergarten. Chapter 1 describes eight things parents need to know to bring out the best in their child. Chapter 2 discusses what every child should be able to communicate before entering kindergarten. Chapter 3 lists and describes the large and small motor skills children need to succeed in kindergarten, while chapter 4 describes the social and emotional skills that will make kindergarten easy for children. Chapter 5 describes early learning activities and chapter 6 suggests self-help skills that make kindergarten enjoyable for children. The last chapter deals with making decisions about kindergarten entrance age and preparing the child for the separation on the first day of school. A parent information form, a checklist of children's behaviors and habits, and a list of fun books to read with children conclude the volume.

Dishion, Thomas J.; Patterson, Scott G. 1996. *Preventive Parenting with Love, Encouragement, and Limits: The Preschool Years.* Eugene, OR: Castalia Publishing Company. Available from: Publishing Company, P.O. Box 1587, Eugene, OR 97440 ($10.95, plus $4 shipping; 5 or more copies, $9.95 each). 136 p.

Infants and toddlers need to learn a wide range of skills from their parents to prepare them for their experiences outside the home. This guide is designed to provide parents with practical, future-oriented suggestions on raising toddlers and preschool-age children. It provides a step-by-step approach to handling everyday problems, promoting the well-being of children, and creating a positive family atmosphere. The goal of this guide is to help parents face the challenges of parenting with skills and confidence. Eight chapters make up this book. Chapter 1, "Focusing on Key Events," deals with identification of key events and problems within the household and effective responses that parents can use. Chapter 2, "Teaching Cooperation," emphasizes the strategies that parents can use to encourage cooperation in children and the long-term benefits for children that accrue from being cooperative. Chapter 3, "Supporting Children's Positive Behavior," claims that children's cooperation should not be taken for granted because positive attention provides the incentive for them to cooperate. The chapter also provides strategies for parents to give incentives to children. Chapter 4, "Using Stickers and Star Charts," discusses children's need for support and motivation to change their behavior. Chapter 5, "Setting Limits on Misbehavior," deals with how to set boundaries for acceptable behavior in children. Chapter 6, "Using Consequences and Time Out," provides some general guidelines on using consequences with young children. Chapter 7, "Coaching Children's Friendships," discusses three essential social skills in children and how parents can help them in developing these skills. Chapter 8, "Building Family Relationships," deals with the well-being of family life through shared activities. Included is a list of further readings on toilet training, bedtime problems, child development, raising teenagers, and marital problems.

Shoemaker, Cynthia J. 1996. *Home Learning Enablers and Other Helps: Home Learning Enablers for Ages Two to Twelve, Parent Papers and Introducing PEP's (Program Enrichment Papers).* Rockville, MD: Early Childhood Education Administration Inst., Rockville, MD. Available from: ECEA Institute, 1370 Canterbury Way, Rockville, MD 20854-6104.

Home learning enablers (HLEs) are easy, carefully timed (5 to 10 minutes each), parent-child activities intended to encourage parents to learn to talk and interact with their children. The HLEs call for materials easily available in the home. Many were tested with 200 children in a pre- and post-test control group design; this study showed an IQ test score group increase of 8 points in two weeks. The first part of the volume contains nine sets of HLEs to be sent home with children from 3 to 13 years of age. On

each sheet the title gives the content of the activity and a why-do-it section gives the objective or purpose of the activity. Also included are the materials and time needed, directions, evaluation tips, and harder or easier ideas related to the same activity. Also included in the first part are parent letters and feedback sheets. The second part contains 18 parent papers to be used as handouts or newsletter inserts. The first set tells parents what to expect from day care, preschool, or early childhood development programs; discusses the importance of reading and talking to young children; and suggests ways to develop the child's self-image. The second set covers helping the child develop self-control, using toys that teach, and understanding numbers. The third part contains 15 program enrichment papers, each of which features a subject matter, process, or activity curriculum approach. The fourth part consists of 14 volunteer program papers, including checklists, tips, and handouts designed for starting volunteer programs in child care centers and public schools.

Silberman, Mel. 1995. *When Your Child is Difficult: Solve Your Toughest Child-Raising Problems with a Four-Step Plan That Works.* ISBN-0-87822-361-4. Champaign, IL: Research Press. Available from: Research Press, Department 96, P.O. Box 9177, Champaign, IL 61826 ($12.95). 117 p.

Written for parents, this book discusses 4 steps for dealing with children's difficult behavior. The book is divided into 2 parts. Part 1 discusses baseline perspectives parents need to establish in order to effectively deal with difficult behavior. Topics covered include:

1. Parents' dual roles as caregivers and decision makers; and
2. Impediments to and possibilities for changes in children's behavior.

Part 2 discusses the particular steps parents can follow. Topics covered include:

1. How to be specific about your expectations of your child;
2. Ways to remain calm and confident in your parenting;
3. How to select the best course of action; and
4. How to nurture supportive relationships with other parents.

The book offers concrete ways to achieve each of these steps.

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Notable Newsletters

CompuKids

CompuKids is a newsletter devoted to helping children, especially children with disabilities, gain practical information and ideas on effectively using computers. Each issue includes a feature article on a topic such as play or literacy, and the following monthly columns: "Keyboard Shortcuts/Tips" provides helpful tips and ordering information for items that make keyboards more accessible to disabled children; "I Can Do It" Activities provides software reviews, pointing out specific ways the software can be used with disabled children; "I Need Help" is a question/answer section; and "For Kids by Kids" is a page for kids to publish their artwork (graphics, poetry, stories). A one year subscription to this bimonthly publication is $14.95.

Contact:
Cindy Anderson
5615 13th Avenue, South
Minneapolis, MN 55417
(612) 825-0559

National Fathers' Network Newsletter

This newsletter is primarily published for fathers and families of children with special needs. The Winter 1995/1996 edition contains stories written by fathers, recounting their experiences as parents of children with special needs such as spina bifida, Downs syndrome, and autism.

A subscription to the newsletter may range in cost from $5.00 to $50.00, depending on the level of support subscribers are able to commit.

Contact:
Kindering Center
Attn: James May
16120 N.E. Eighth Street
Bellevue, WA 98008-3937

Issues

Issues is published bi-monthly by the Child Abuse Council. It contains articles to educate, advocate, and inform communities about issues affecting children and families. The March/April 1996 issue is devoted to articles on the prevention of child abuse.

Subscriptions are $15 for an individual; $25 for a family.

Contact:
Child Abuse Council
525 Sixteenth Street
Moline, IL 61265

Parent News for July 1996

NETWorking: Other Gopher and WWW Sites to Visit

Name: Early Childhood Education at North Seattle Community College

Description: This site contains a guide on helping children as young as 3 years old learn to write and illustrate narrative stories, and read them to parents or other adults. It also includes a section called "Good Books for Group Time" with suggestions on using books to expand preschool children's knowledge. Although the site is primarily for preschool teachers, parents can easily use suggestions.

Address: http://nsccux.sccd.ctc.edu/~eceprog

Name: National Safe Kids Campaign

Description: This site contains information on the following topics: child passenger safety, bicycle safety, pedestrian safety, water safety, fire safety, scald burn prevention, preventing falls, poison prevention and contacting emergency personnel.

Address: http://www.oclc.org/safekids/SAFEKMM2.html

Name: Taking Charge of Your TV: A Guide to Critical Viewing for Parents and Children

Description: The Family and Community Critical Viewing Project is sponsored by the National Parent Teacher Association, the National Cable Television Association and Cable in the Classroom. The guide includes how to set rules for TV viewing, recognizing methods used to construct certain messages, how to turn what is seen on TV into positive and educational family discussions, and how to talk to children about TV violence. The site includes activity sheets such as "Sellers Go Where the Buyers Are" that families can use to analyze commercial products.

Address: http://www.widmeyer.com/TV/viewing/tips.htm

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The PARENTING Calendar

CONFERENCE: Careers and Kids: Balancing Work and Parenting Responsibilities

Date: July 25-26, 1996

Place: Los Angeles, California

Description: This is the Third Annual National Parenting Instructors Conference, sponsored by the National Parenting Instructors Association and Working Mother Magazine. Keynote speakers and workshops will focus on helping parents to balance work and parenting responsibilities.

Contact: 1-800-325-2422

CONFERENCE: Annual International Rimm Underachievement Institute

Date: August 5-9, 1996

Place: St. Cloud, Minnesota

Description: Sponsored by the Central Minnesota Service Cooperative, the focus of this conference is on underachieving students. It is designed for parents, K-12 teachers, counselors, pscyhologists, and administrators.

Contact: Pat Denne
P.O. Box 1576
St. Cloud, Minnesota 56302
(612) 255-3236
Fax: (612) 255-2998

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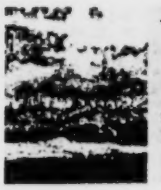

NPIN
National Parent Information Network

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- The Parent's Guide: Use TV to Your Child's Advantage
- San Francisco: School Choice Parent Guides
- Parental Leave Law: Update
- Effects of Family Character on Students School-to-Work Transitions
- New Report on Child Care
- Students Identify Teachers as Highlight of School Years
- Garage Door Hazards
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- Twins!
- Favorite Items at Toy Libraries
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Artwork by Andrea Shields.
Send comments to NPIN Webmaster.

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Television Viewing Habits of Black Children

Over the years, parents, educators and our country's leaders have expressed concern over the number of hours children spend watching television when they could be engaged in more productive activities. In a nationwide survey conducted in 1994 by the National Center for Education Statistics, it was revealed that black children, particularly those in the District of Columbia, watch more television (6 or more hours per day) than their white or Hispanic peers (4 or more hours per day).

Researchers believe the cause of the difference is economic, not racial. Many black families have little or no money to provide their children with extracurricular activities such as tennis or music lessons. Others are reluctant to let their children play outdoors where guns and drugs pose dangers to their children's lives. Sherri Parks, professor at the University of Maryland says that for these families, "television is a way of keeping your child physically safe."

Parks also suggests that African Americans may be attracted to the spoken word as presented on television because it echoes the oral traditions within their culture. Some limited research on a related topic supports the hypothesis that black children retain more information when it is spoken rather than written.

(Source: "Glued to Their TV Sets: The viewing habits of black children may be more a factor of poverty than of race." *The Washington Post National Weekly Edition*, July 1-7, 1996, p. 31.)

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The Parent's Guide: Use TV to Your Child's Advantage

This book, by Dorothy G. Singer, Ed.D, Jerome L. Singer, Ph.D., and Diana M. Zuckerman, Ph.D., and endorsed by Fred Rogers of "Mister Rogers' Neighborhood," includes suggestions parents can use to moderate the television viewing experience in their homes. The book includes general information about television and parent/child activities that will be included in Parent News over the next few months.

Excerpts and Summaries of points in *Chapter One: the Challenges Of Television*

Television is here to stay! Parents can be proactive and help their children use television programs to "stimulate their children's learning and creativity" (p. 9) and also help them become critical viewers of television programs. Activities described in the book are not intended to increase the amount of time children spend watching television, but will help them get the most out of what they view.

In 1989, more than 99% of American families owned at least one television set. Many families owned two or three, and 68.8% of homes owned a videotape recorder.

Certain properties that distinguish television from other media are:

Attention Demand. Continuous movement evokes an orienting response as the viewer focuses attention on the screen. As movements on the screen become rapid and music becomes louder, the nervous system is activated.

Brevity of Sequences. Interactions among people, events, and commercials are vivid and short.

Interference Effects. The rapid succession of material prevents children from mentally repeating or reflecting on new material in order to process and make sense of it.

Complexity of Presentation. Several senses are simultaneously stimulated by sight, sound and the printed word.

Visual Orientation. Television is visually oriented and minimizes attention to other sources of input.

Emotional Range. Action presented is more vivid on television than any other media.

While television may seem to be a vehicle that can enrich a child's life by introducing vocabulary and new sights, it must be remembered that children comprehend material on a different level than adults. They often have difficulty separating reality from fantasy, believing, for example, that a teddy bear can talk. Time and space concepts are distorted. Young children think concretely and have difficulty understanding metaphors and similes. Young children are very literal in their interpretations of events on television.

Research on children and television cited in the book:

- Boys watch more television than girls.
- Children who watch a lot of television spend less time in conversation with parents and other family members.
- Children who watch a lot of television have difficulties developing imagination and a playful attitude.
- Children who are heavy television viewers are often more aggressive and have difficulties with

day-to-day behaviors in kindergarten.

Next month's Parent News will review and provide excerpts from Chapter 2: Constructive Possibilities and Hazards of Television.

The Parent's Guide: Use TV to Your Child's Advantage, (1990), by Dorothy G. Singer, Jerome L. Singer, and Diana M. Zuckerman. Published by Acropolis Books Ltd.

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San Francisco: School Choice Parent Guides

Parents in San Francisco can choose the public school their children attend, because of an open-enrollment policy in the school district. Last year, Steve Rees, owner of Publishing 20/20 produced a guide containing information about the 107 elementary, middle and high schools from which parents could choose to enroll their children. The guide cost $14.95 and was available in bookstores and grocery stores.

The school district was amenable to the concept last year because the guide could potentially serve as a valuable service to parents. The school district allowed Rees to interview principals and provided him with data about the schools and descriptions of academic programs to help him prepare an informative guide.

This year, however, the school district is not cooperating with Rees. Objections have been raised to the guide's contents, which include statistics on neighborhood crime obtained by Rees from police and transit-authority reports.

The school district is concerned that Rees's guides contain too much editorializing and neighborhood crime data presented in ways that are not useful or appropriate. The school district is also concerned with Rees's hiring of middle and high school students to interview their peers for comments to be included in the guides.

(Source: "S.F. Officials Take Issue With Update of Parent Guides", *Education Week*, June 12, 1996, p. 9).

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Parental Leave Law: Update

More than 3 years ago, on February 5, 1993, President Clinton signed the 1993 Family Leave Act, which required employers with more than 50 workers to provide up to 12 weeks of unpaid leave to employees at a child's birth, adoption or otherwise care for members of their families who were ill.

According to a survey released by the Commission on Family and Medical leave, however, over half of parents covered by the act are not yet aware of its existence. The Commission's survey findings include:

- Eighty-six percent of employers know about the law.
- Although 66.1% of workers are employed by worksites that must comply with the Act, only 54.9% were eligible. The remaining workers had not worked long enough or did not meet other criteria.
- Larger employers were more likely to have to grant leave than smaller employers, but only 1.3% were forced to reduce other benefits to cover costs associated with granting family leave.
- Only 2.5% of employers said they saved money because of the Act, through reduced turnover and improved morale.
- 16.5% of employees took family leave, but another 3.4% who needed to take advantage of the Family Leave Act did not do so because they could not afford to miss a paycheck.
- The median leave taken is 10 days.

(Source: "Parental Leave Law Still a Sleeper" *Day Care USA*, July 8, 1996, pp. 2-3.)

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Effects of Family Character on Students School-to-Work Transitions

A national study of 1,266 high school seniors and 879 adult students enrolled at two-year colleges was conducted by the National Center for Research in Vocational Education (NCRVE) to determine how family habits affected students' readiness for work.

Study results indicate that specific family activities help children learn concepts that are key to holding a job. These concepts include: intrinsic motivation (need or desire that arises from within the individual and causes action toward a goal) and extrinsic motivation (need or desire that arises from promise and/or expectation of a reward), self-efficacy (belief or expectation about one's own abiilty to perform a given task successfully), and critical thinking (the ability to deal reasonably with questions about what to believe). Students from families in which the members are well-organized, speak their mind, manage conflict positively, and make decisions through careful discussion and democratic negotiation, seemed to be better prepared for the work place.

(Source: "NCRVE: Family Character Nurtures Work Readiness," *Education Daily*, July 10, 1996, p. 4.)

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New Report on Child Care

A new report "Who's Minding Our Preschoolers, March 1996" includes the following statistical information on child care (based on 1993 data) from the U.S. Census Bureau:

- 9.9 million children under the age of 5 needed child care in 1993 while their mother worked.
- The number of preschool children receiving care in organized child care facilities increased almost 30% between 1991 and 1993.
- 17% of preschool children received care through informal family daycare arrangements. This figure was down from 24%, reported in 1991.
- The number of fathers providing primary care for their children declined from 20% in 1991 to 16% in 1993.
- Black and Hispanic mothers (40%) rely more heavily on relatives for child care than do white mothers (20%).
- Families in the South are more likely to choose organized child care facilities than families in other regions.
- Families in the Northeast are more likely to choose relatives to provide care--particularly fathers--than are families in other regions.

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Students Identify Teachers as the Highlight of Their School Years

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How do children *really* feel about their teachers? The Metropolitan Life Insurance Company (MetLife) recently surveyed approximately 2,500 students in grades 7-12 to ask that question. The findings include:

- Over 75% of the students report their teachers are "excellent" or "pretty good".
- Students were concerned about lack of equipment in science laboratories and gymnasiums, and overcrowded classrooms.
- Only 54% of students earning C or lower grades praised their teachers. Three-fourths of those earning A's and B's praised their teachers.
- 66% of minority students praised their teachers.
- 69% of urban students praised their teachers.

A free copy of the report "The Metropolitan Life Survey of the American Teacher, 1996: Students Voice Their Opinions on their Education, Teachers and Schools - Part II" can be obtained by writing to MetLife Teachers Survey 1996, P.O. Box 807, Madison Square Station, New York, NY 10159-0807.

(Source: "Most Students Cite Teachers as Highlights at School," *Education Daily*, June 27, 1996, page 3-4.)

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Garage Door Hazards

Since 1982, more than 50 children between the ages of 2 and 14 have died as a result of accidents involving automatic garage doors. Children can be fatally injured if struck or pinned by these doors, which are typically the heaviest moving object in the home. The automatic garage doors in older homes frequently do not meet current safety standards. The Consumer Product Safety Commission advises homeowners to upgrade doors manufactured before 1993. Newer doors stop and reverse their motion if they contact an object before they reach the ground level. Wall- mounted switches should be the type that must be held down continuously for the door to close completely.

(Source: "Beware Garage Door Hazard," *Our Children*, March/April 1996, page 4).

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"Dads and Their Daughters"

The National Coalition of Girls' Schools is promoting a new book "Dads and Their Daughters." The 16-page booklet is written by fathers, who explain how they make quality time for their daughters. The editor of the book, Alicia DeNicola, was prompted to put the book together by research studies that estimate that the average father spends less than 30 minutes per week with his children. Psychologists suspect daughters typically get less of their dad's attention than sons get.

The booklet costs $4.50 and can be ordered from the National Coalition of Girls' Schools, 228 Main St., Concord, Massachusetts, 01742.

(Source: "Private Schools" column in *Education Week*, June 12, 1996, page 9.)

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Twins!

The theme of the July 1996 issue of *Indy's Child*, a newspaper for parents published in the Indianapolis area, is twins and/or multiple births. Forty-eight percent of all twins in the United States are under the age of 7, partly due to the increase in the use of fertility drugs in this country. The National Center for Health Statistics reports that one in 40 births are now multiples of three or more.

Parents of twins or multiples face a number of challenges. They are often stopped in public places by admiring and inquisitive strangers. Many parents report feeling as though their children are a curiosity and public property, and that their privacy is constantly being invaded when they are asked highly personal questions regarding fertility drugs.

One issue parents of twins face is the decision about class placement in school. Many parents want their children separated, while others strongly feel that their twins should remain together. According to "Twins in School: Together or Apart," a publication of Twin Services, principals and teachers must be aware of the special needs of twins:

- They must be treated as individuals.
- Their special friendship and bond must be respected when they are initially separated in two different classrooms by letting them visit each other periodically to reassure themselves that they are both OK.
- Twins are often aware of each other's actions, even though this awareness may not be evident to observers. Twins should be placed in the same classroom as long as they want to be together or benefit from being together.
- The placements should be evaluated each year and assignments made based on the twins' needs. Twins who have spent a year together in kindergarten may be ready to separate at first grade. Conversely, twins who are separated for a year may benefit from being placed together again.
- Recognize that individual rates of development may exist and should be addressed. Trying to keep them moving along academically at the same pace can cause resentment to develop if one twin is further along than the other. It is best to meet the needs of each child independently.

Others issues twin families face include doubled financial expenditures for clothing and schooling, especially costs for college.

Support groups for parents of twins are:

Twin Services. (510) 524-0863. Over 40 low cost handouts and packets for parents of twins, and child care providers serving twins.

Twin Pleasures. 1-800-TWIN-BKS. This organization publishes a newsletter called "From Our House to Yours" and markets items for twins' birthday parties.

Mothers of Super Twins. (317) 477-9720. This organization offers new member packets to parents of twins.

Twins Magazine. (913) 722-1090. A magazine focusing on twins.

The Twins Days Festival is held annually in Twins Days, Ohio. This year's convention will take place August 4-August 6. Activities include free hot dogs for twins, and a "Double Take" Parade. For more

information, call (216) 425-3652.

(Sources: "Multiples" Susan Cohen Strange, *Indy's Child* July, 1996, page 22-25., and "Twins in School: Together or Apart?" published by Twin Services, P.O. Box 10066, Berkeley, CA 94709.)

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Favorite Items at Toy Libraries

Toy libraries are becoming more popular across the country. Basically, toy libraries are a collection of toys that may be checked out by parents on behalf of their children, often operated by libraries, child care centers, child care resource and referral agencies, or parenting programs.

The USA Toy Library Association recently conducted a survey of toy libraries, and listed the following as "most popular":

- **Most popular**. Ride-on vehicles such as trikes, trucks, cars, vans, tractors, airplanes, trains, and animals with wheels.
- **Second Place**. Manipulative blocks such as Legos, magnetic, building, rubber, and waffle.
- **Third Place**. Musical toys such as music boxes, keyboards, drums, xylophones, tape players, bells, action bands, and pianos.
- **Fourth Place**. Puzzles of all kinds.
- **Fifth Place**. Imaginary playsets that consist of a physical setting that miniature people and animals may be manipulated in make-believe scenarios.

To find a toy library near you, or to find out how to set one up, write to the USA Toy Library Association, 2530 Crawford Avenue, #111, Evanston, IL 60201.

(Source: Children's Foundation (CF) Child Care Bulletin, April 1996, p. 3)

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Funding Opportunites to Address Violence By and Against Juveniles

The Department of Justice believes that communities can address the problems caused by the high rates of violence committed by and against juveniles and turn back the tide of increasing violent delinquency by providing both vigorous law enforcement and early intervention services for at-risk juveniles and their families.

The "FY 1996 Discretionary Competitive Program Announcements and Application Kit" (SL000163) is based on strategies contained in the Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention's (OJJDP) "Guide for Implementing the Comprehensive Strategy for Serious, Violent, and Chronic Juvenile Offenders" to help communities combat juvenile crime, and on objectives contained in the "National Juvenile Justice Action Plan."

The "Application Kit" focuses on three major new program areas: community assessment centers, partnerships to reduce juvenile gun violence, and improving community approaches to child abuse and neglect. The OJJDP also will fund evaluations of these programs. In addition, training and technical assistance funds will be awarded in the areas of disproportionate minority confinement, Native American and Alaskan Native communities, and gender-specific services for female juvenile offenders. Finally, the OJJDP is soliciting proposals on juvenile mentoring programs.

The following is a list of the program announcements and due dates.

1. Juvenile Mentoring Program (JUMP)
   Deadline: September 20, 1996

2. Evaluation of the Juvenile Mentoring Program (JUMP)
   Deadline: September 20, 1996

3. Safe Kids/Safe Streets-Community Approaches To Reducing Abuse and Neglect and Preventing Delinquency
   Deadline: September 9, 1996

4. Evaluation of the Safe Kids/Safe Streets Program
   Deadline: September 9, 1996

5. Community Assessment Centers
   Community Assessment Centers: Planning for the Future,
   Deadline: August 21, 1996

   Community Assessment Centers: Enhancing the Concept,
   Deadline: August 21, 1996

   Evaluating Community Assessment Centers
   Deadline: September 3, 1996

   Community Assessment Center Training and Technical Assistance
   Deadline: September 3, 1996

6. Partnerships To Reduce Juvenile Gun Violence
   Deadline: August 21, 1996

7. Evaluation of the Partnerships To Reduce Juvenile Gun Violence Program
   Deadline: August 21, 1996

8. Technical Assistance to Native American Tribes and Alaskan Native Communities
   Deadline: August 16, 1996

9. Training and Technical Assistance for National Innovations To Reduce Disproportionate Minority Confinement (The Deborah Ann Wysinger Memorial Program)
   Deadline: August 26, 1996

10. Training and Technical Assistance Program To Promote Gender-Specific Programming for Female Juvenile Offenders and At-Risk Girls
    Deadline: August 16, 1996

11. Field-Initiated Research and Evaluation Program
    Deadline: August 21, 1996

The "Application Kit" is organized into two major sections. The first section provides application and administrative requirements. The second major section contains discretionary competitive program State contacts, peer review guidelines, excerpts from the "Catalog of Federal Domestic Assistance," and extra blank forms.

The "Application Kit" is available free from the Juvenile Justice Clearinghouse (JJC) in a medium to suit your needs. Hard copies can be ordered by sending an e-mail request to askncjrs@ncjrs.org; by writing P.O. Box 6000, Rockville, MD 20849-6000; or by calling 1-800-638-8736 to request that the document be mailed to you. Be sure to mention SL000163. The "Application Kit" is also available electronically via the Internet and Fax-on-Demand. Consult OJJDP's World Wide Web Homepage, Highlights Section, at http://www.ncjrs.org/ojjh ome.htm. For copies via Fax-on-Demand, call 1-800-638-8736; select option 1 for automated ordering services and select option 2 for Fax-on-Demand instructions and a list of available titles. The "Application Kit" is broken out by instructions, individual solicitations, and forms.

For questions and additional information, send an e-mail to askncjrs@ncjrs.org.

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*Read*Write*Now: Summer Reading Program Kit Available*

Free kits of the Read*Write*Now Program sponsored by the United States Department of Education are now available from the National Parent Information Network, ERIC Clearinghouse on Elementary and Early Childhood Education. The program is designed as a summer challenge to improve the reading and writing skills of children pre-school through 6th grade. The kits include the booklet, "Activities for Reading and Writing Fun" in addition to "how to" materials, a vocabulary log, and certificates.

The kit can be requested by calling 1-800-583-4135.

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Summaries/Reviews of Books for Parents

Tubbs, Janet. 1995. *Middle-Aged Children: Getting through the Tough Preteens. A Survival Guide for Kids Ages 9 to 12.* Scottsdale, AZ: Children's Resource Center. Available from Children's Resource Center, P.O. Box 8697, Scottsdale, AZ 85252-8697 ($14.95, plus $1.50 shipping and handling. Arizona residents add 7.1% tax). 119p. ISBN-1-881185-05-2

This guide is addressed to children in the often neglected middle years--ages 9 through 12--to help them see themselves as good persons and students in the process of growing up. Part one discusses issues that concern children as persons: self-esteem, things that can hurt and annoy, disabilities, dilemmas and decisions, learning to say no to gangs and cults, and understanding persons of other cultures. Part two focuses on ways in which children can change their attitudes and grades to become better students. Some of the topics explored are homework, use of the library and preparation for tests. The book is designed to be a personal journal in addition to being a guide, by keeping all left-hand pages blank so that they can be used by the children to jot down notes and/or make drawings.

Ambert, Anne-Marie. 1992. *The Effect of Children on Parents.* Binghamton, NY: The Haworth Press, Inc., 10 Alice Street, Binghamton, NY 13904-1580 ($17.95, plus $3 postage). 326p. ISBN-1-56024-118-7.

Though not a new concept, child effect has yet to be integrated into mainstream research. This book offers a review of what is already "known" but generally ignored in the area of how children affect their parents, what kinds of children most affect their parents, and what characteristics in parents make them especially vulnerable to child effect. Following a brief introduction, the chapters of the book are grouped in sections as follows:

1. "The Neglected Perspective: Children's Effect on Parents," including traditional literature and emerging theories;
2. "Areas of Parents' Lives" [likely to be affected by the presence of children], including health, living space, personality, and attitudes;
3. "Determinants of Child Effect";
4. "Theoretical Synthesis," including unavoidable and avoidable child effect;
5. "The Effect of Juvenile Delinquency";
6. "Children's Emotional Problems and Difficult Child Episodes";
7. "Students' Perceptions of the Effect They Have Had on Their Parents";
8. "The Impact of Children on Divorced Parents";
9. "Mothering Children Who Have Severe Chronic Illnesses" (Patricia McKeever);
10. "Children's Active Role in Mother's Premenstrual Syndrome" (Marion Pirie);
11. "Two Case Studies of Interracial Mothers and Daughters" (Saroj Chawla and Anne-Marie Ambert);
12. "Mother-Blaming in a Recent Hemingway Biography"; and
13. "Additional Considerations and Conclusions," including immigrant and adoptive parents, and parental gratification. Contains approximately 660 references.

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Notable Newsletters

The CF Child Care Bulletin

Formerly the *Family Day Care Bulletin*, the *CF Child Care Bulletin* is a publication of The Children's Foundation. It includes articles and up-to-date information on child care, nutrition and food programs, educational opportunities, parent education, a conference and seminar calendar, and a review of resources for child care programs and parents. It is published six times a year; the subscription price for individuals is $20/year.

Early Childhood Training Newsletter

This newsletter primarily serves Rutland County, Vermont, but includes articles and information parents and those who work with children can use in their work with children. For example, the July/August issue included a list of free resources, recipes for cooking with children, a list of "Bet You Can" activities, information from the Consumer Product Safety Commission, legislative updates, and conference and workshop announcements. The subscription price is $15/year.

Contact:
Rutland County Parent/Child Center Inc.
61 Pleasant Street
Rutland, Vermont 05701
1-800-480-9711.

The National Parent Aide Network Update Newsletter

This quarterly newsletter is published by the National Parent Aide Network, whose mission is to develop and support parent aid programs across the country, with the purpose of promoting activities that strengthen families and prevent child abuse and neglect. It includes personal stories written by parents, information about legislation supporting family programs, a conference calendar, and articles related to child abuse and neglect. The newsletter is provided to members of the National Parent Aide Network. The membership fee for individuals is $10.00.

Contact:
National Parent Aide Network
3050 Central Avenue
Toledo, OH 43606-1700
Toll Free Phone: 800-760-3413

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NETWorking: Other Gopher and WWW Sites to Visit

Name: Parent's Place

Description: This web site includes articles on pregnancy, breastfeeding, adolescence, parenting, fathering, children's health and education, family activities and more. Opportunities for parents to engage in dialog with other parents are also available.

Address: http://www.parentsplace.com:80/index.html

Name: Family Planet

Description: This web site includes six different sections:

"News" (weekday summaries of news items related to families), "Sound Off" (information about contacting other parents to discuss hot topics, trade tips, and visit with authors and experts), "Parenting" (a team of experts answers questions on tough topics), "Best of the Web" (comprehensive list of easy and safe access to educational and entertainment web sites), "E-Cards" (electronic greeting cards for all occasions), and "Fun Stuff" (movie reviews, activities, event calendars, and reviews of toys, books and software).

Address: http://family.starwave.com/index.html

Name: Kids Source

Description: This is a resource service for parents and educators focusing on health, education, and recreation information. It includes information on newborns, toddlers, preschoolers, and K-12, information on products and a guide to software.

Address: http://www.kidsource.com/

Name: Foster Parent Home Page

Description: These web pages are dedicated to foster parents and those interested in foster parenting. The intention is to create an interactive forum for foster parents, as well as provide a resource of information related to foster care and issues related to foster care.

Address: http://www.worldaccess.com/~clg46/

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Organizations of Interest to Parents

BANANAS, Inc.

BANANAS, Inc. is a non profit child care resource service serving the population in Northern Alameda County, California. In addition to a bimonthly newsletter (available for $5/yr) containing articles on child care and parenting issues, BANANAS publishes handouts (available for $.25 each) on topics such as Child Care; Projects, Crafts and Activities; Day-to-Day Family Issues; and Health and Safety Issues.

Contact:
BANANAS, Inc.
5232 Claremont Avenue
Oakland, CA 94618
(510) 658-1409

Association for Child Development

The Association for Child Development is a federally funded non- profit organization engaged in the following activities: sponsorship of the Child Care Food Program which helps child care providers in furnishing nutritious meals and snacks; operates child care centers; administers a food distribution program that provides opportunities to purchase high-quality, bulk packaged food products for child care centers; publishes a monthly newsletter called "Potpourri" with articles on nutrition, child development, menu ideas and craft projects; and, offers free technical assistance in setting up a child care business.

Contact:
Association for Child Development
Central Office
P.O. Box 1491
East Lansing, Michigan 48826-1491
(800) 234-3287
(517) 332-7200
FAX: (517) 332-5543

National Middle School Association

The National Middle School Association (NMSA) is an association of teachers, parents, administrators, professors, and community members interested in the educational experiences of young adolescents. Members receive newsletters and journals focusing on the middle school student, as well as opportunities to interact online with experts on middle school education. NMSA publishes books, pamphlets, and videos for parents, teachers, and administrators. NMSA's World Wide Web site offers excerpts and full text articles from newsletters, including an article called "TIPS...For Living Successfully with Your Young Adolescent" written specifically for parents.

Contact:
National Middle School Association
2600 Corporate Exchange Drive, Suite 370
Columbus, OH 43231
Telephone: (614) 895-4730
Toll Free: 1-800-528-NASA

Fax: 614-895-4750
URL: http://snow-white.gac.peachnet.edu/talk/org/edu/nmsa

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The PARENTING Calendar

CONFERENCE: California Home Education Conference

Date: August 24-25, 1996

Place: Radisson Hotel, Sacramento, California

Description: This is the second of two conferences sponsored by the Home School Association of California.

Contact: David & David Enterprises
P.O. Box 231324
Sacramento, CA 95823-0405
(916) 391-4942
Email: CHEC95@aol.com

CONFERENCE: A National Summit on Latino Children

Date: September 11-13, 1996

Place: Plaza San Antonio Hotel, San Antonio, TX.

Description: The three-day summit entitled "La Promesa de un Futuro Brillante" (the promise for a bright future) will offer opportunities for careful consideration of the most urgent issues for Latino children combined with an exploration of policy, exemplary programs, and resources available through public and private entities. The summit will bring together our nation's top leaders and offer opportunities for focused dialogue to improve the lives of Latino children. Full registration is $200 before August 22, 1996.

Keynote speakers include Mrs. Tipper Gore, wife of the Vice President of the United States, and Robert Reich, Secretary of Labor; Secretary of Health and Human Services Donna Shalala; Attorney General Janet Reno; former Surgeon General Dr. Antonia Novello, and Univision talk-show host Cristina Sareguli.

Contact: National Latino Children's Agenda Institute
1611 West Sixth Street
Austin, TX 78703
Phone: 512-472-9971
Fax: 512-472-5845
Email: nlca@inetport.com
HandsNet ID: hn7071

CONFERENCE: Weaving a National Commitment: New Challenges and Strategies for Protecting Children

Date: September 16-21, 1996

Place: Washington Hilton and Towers Hotel, 1919 Connecticut Avenue NW, Washington, D.C.

Description: This is the 11th Annual National Conference on Child Abuse and Neglect. The conference will bring together the viewpoints of diverse communities, professional disciplines, and public policy

makers through workshops, skills seminars, roundtables, think tanks, adjunct meetings, a film festival, exhibits and networking sessions.

Keynote speaker will be Jonathan Kozol, author of many books including *Amazing Grace*, a documentary of poverty and racial isolation in the South Bronx. Donna E. Shalala, Secretary of the Department of Health and Human Services will deliver welcoming remarks.

Contact: The 11th Annual National Conference on Child Abuse and Neglect, Research Assessment, Inc.
1300 Spring Street, Suite 210
Silver Spring, MD 20910
Phone: (301) 589-8242
Fax: (301) 589-8246

CONFERENCE: Changing Conceptions of Giftedness

Date: October 30-November 3, 1996

Place: Indianpolis Convention Center, Hyatt Regency Hotel/Westin Hotel, Indianpolis, Indiana

Description: This is the 43rd Annual Convention of the National Association for Gifted Children. Classroom teachers, educators, administrators, coordinators, guidance counselors, and parents are invited to attend to focus on topics such as educational reform, computers and technology, advocacy, equity and excellence, psychosocial needs, cognitive thinking skills, standards, authentic assessments, challenging and differentiated core curriculum, creativity, ability grouping, and gifted children in the regular classroom.

Contact: National Association for Gifted Children
1707 L Street, NW Suite 550
Washington, DC 20036
(202) 785-4268

CONFERENCE: National Head Start Association's 13th Annual Parents Training Conference

Date: December 6-9, 1996

Place: Houston, Texas

Description: Parents of children in Head Start Programs are invited to attend this workshop and conference on concerns of parenting and education such as child growth and development, communicating with the young child, health concerns, cultural diversity and ethnic sensitivity in Head Start, computers in the Head Start classroom, and methods for disciplining children.

Contact: National Head Start Association
1651 Prince Street
Alexandria, VA 22314
Phone: 703-739-0875
Fax: 703-739-0878

CONFERENCE: Renewing Our Sense of Community

Date: December 4-7, 1996

Place: Hyatt Regency, Minneapolis, MN

Description: This is the 31st Annual Conference of the National Community Education Association.

Contact: National Community Education Association
3929 Old Lee Highway, Suite 91-A
Fairfax, VA 22030-2401
Phone: (703) 359-8973
Fax: (703) 359-0972

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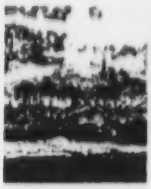

NPIN

National Parent Information Network

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Artwork by Andrea Shields.
Send comments to NPIN Webmaster.

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Parent News for September 1996

Help Kids Behave in the Grocery Store

The following article is reprinted with permission from Illinois Parents Anonymous, Statewide News.

What To Do In the Grocery Store To Help Kids Behave...

Plan Ahead

Check Attitudes - Is your child too tired or hungry to shop? If yes, postpone your trip or find a sitter.

Agree on Rules - Before entering the store: "Stay close to the cart," "Use your quiet voice."

Agree on Rewards - For good behavior: Keep it simple - choice of one snack food, a stop at the park. Promise to read a book or play a game at home.

At the Store

Make a game of it - Who can see the potatoes, soap first? Do you remember what animal milk comes from? Who is wearing red? What foods start with a B?

Involve the child in the shopping - "Should we buy apples or oranges? Corn flakes or raisin bran? Popsicles or ice cream?"

Play - "I see something" in the checkout lane: ask the child to guess what it is.

Praise your child - "You are so helpful!" "You are making good choices today."

If All Else Fails

Remember: Kids will be kids - they are not perfect!

Ignore inappropriate behavior unless it becomes dangerous, destructive, embarrassing to you or annoying to others.

Remove a child who is out of control - Take him to the restroom or out of the store. Tell him quietly, eyeball to eyeball, that his behavior is totally unacceptable.

Wait, saying nothing else, for the child to calm down. Then ask if he is ready to try again.

Go home if the child cannot calm down. Find a sitter and return alone.

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Buying Shoes for the New School Year

Parents frequently take their school-age children shopping before the new school year begins. Together, they select clothes, shoes, and school accessories such as backpacks.

Selecting appropriate shoes is often a concern. Parents want to purchase well-fitting shoes that provide support for their child's growing feet. Children want to purchase shoes adorned with their favorite character or the latest trendy shoe that all the other kids are wearing.

The American Orthopaedic Foot and Ankle Society (AOFAS) offers the following tips:

- Shoes for school age children should be flexible and made of breathable leather or canvas.
- Girls should avoid high heels or pointed toes which can crowd toes.
- Between the ages of 4-9, the child's feet should be measured every 4 months.
- The feet of children aged 10 and over should be measured every 6 months.

To receive a free brochure, "A Guide to Children's Shoes" send a self-addressed stamped envelope to:

Children's Shoes
American Orthopaedic Foot and Ankle Society
701 16th Avenue
Seattle, WA 98122

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The Parent's Guide: Use TV to Your Child's Advantage

This book, by Dorothy G. Singer, Ed.D., Jerome L. Singer, Ph.D., and Diana Zuckerman, Ph.D., and endorsed by Fred Rogers of "Mister Rogers' Neighborhood," includes suggestions parents can use to moderate the television viewing experience in their homes. The book includes general information about television and parent/child activities that will be included in Parent News over the next few months.

Excerpts and Summaries of points in *Chapter Two: Constructive Possibilities and Hazards of Television* (see August 1996 Parent News for Chapter 1)

Television plays a major role in children's lives. The average number of hours spent viewing television varies from about 3 hours a day for preschoolers to 5 hours a day for elementary-school-aged children. Poor and black children spend even more time before the TV--5 « to 6 hours per day. In addition, for a large segment of the school-aged population, more time is spent in front of the screen than in school.

Studies conducted by the Yale Family Television Research and Consultation Center have found that:

- Children who spent more time watching television tended to have parents who watched more television and who were less likely to impose limits on their children's television viewing.
- Children who watched more fantasy-violent programs were described by their teachers as less cooperative, less successful in their relationships, less happy, and less imaginative, regardless of their IQ scores.
- Children who watched more cartoons were rated by their teachers as unenthusiastic about learning.
- Heavy television viewers were found to be more restless and showed more behavior problems in school.
- Children who watched less TV tended to have more interest and participate in more activities where they can learn to get along with other children, as well as family members.

The researchers point out that television does have a place in the home as well as the classroom if it is used with discretion. However, further research is needed to determine how to use television more creatively and to influence people to help and respect each other.

Next month's *Parent News* will review and provide excerpts from Chapter 3: Parents' Questions about TV.

(Source: "The Parent's Guide: Use TV to Your Child's Advantage," 1990, by Dorothy G. Singer, Jerome L. Singer, and Diana M. Zuckerman. Published by Acropolis Books Ltd.)

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Let's Get Organized!

Are organization problems hampering your children's academic progress? Some signs to look for:

- Are your child's notebooks falling apart at the seams?
- Does your child lose notes and assignments?

If the answer is yes, it's never too late to get organized! For children to succeed in school, they must have good organizational skills. While adults often rely on file cabinets, calendars, planners, and computerized database managers, most children rely on three-ring or spiral notebooks and their memories. As a result, children need better organizational tools and more effective instruction, followed up by supervised practice from parents.

Here is a system you can try to help your child get organized. It involves a folder filing system, a homework folder, and planning sheets. Since it is sometimes difficult to decide how to file some items, it is best for adults to offer hands-on assistance until children learn the basics of the system.

The Folder Filing System

Use 2-pocket cardboard folders with metal prongs in the center. This allows storage of papers with and without punched holes.

Children will need a separate folder for each school subject, and a separate homework folder for storing homework materials, school supplies, and miscellaneous papers.

Show children how to sort their papers by subject. If there are papers that are used for more than one class, put them in the homework folder.

Punch holes in papers used over and over again (class outlines, reading lists, instructions for major projects) and attach them to the center prongs.

Use the front pocket as an "in box" for temporary storage of worksheets that need to be filed and other papers that need attention.

Use the back pocket for subject papers, putting the newest paper on top.

Organizing the Homework Folder

This is the most important piece in the organizational system. Children should take it with them to each class and carry it back and forth from home everyday.

Fill a plastic envelope with basic school supplies (pens, pencils, eraser, ruler) and attach it to the center prongs. Have your child add items as needed (colored pencils, protractors , scissors) for special assignments.

Attach planning sheets, calendar, class schedule, a sheet listing emergency information, and a telephone list of friends and classmates to the prongs.

Store blank notebook paper in the back pocket.

Store home-bound and current miscellaneous papers in the front pocket to reduce the chances of forgetting them.

Creating Planning Sheets

Planning sheets need columns with headings: "date due", "subject," "assignment," "special instructions," "materials needed," "priority (for noting in which order to do the assignments), and "X" (for checking off completed assignments). Planning sheets should also include a "To Do" list where extracurricular events, school-related chores, and appointments can be noted.

Remind children that information about tests, quizzes, reports, and long-range projects should be entered onto the planning sheets along with daily assignments.

Because children have difficulty handling long-range assignments, help them divide major projects into a series of daily tasks, use the calendar to create a schedule, and enter a series of daily mini-assignments onto the planning sheets.

- Teach children to prioritize their work by helping them establish an order for doing assignments. Tell them to record how much time they spend on each assignment and the grades they ultimately receive so that they can budget study time in the future. This record of effort and achievement helps motivate children and can be invaluable for assessing teaching and learning problems.

(Source: "Let's Get Organized!" *Our Children*, March/April 1996, pp. 32-33.)

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Types of Contact between Parents and School

Research has found that when school personnel and parents communicate, they establish a stronger learning environment for the student both at home and at school. Schools contact parents for many reasons, including when their child is experiencing academic or behavioral difficulties, when the teacher wants to discuss future plans for the child, or when the school is looking for parent volunteers. It is important to determine, however, whether parents are being contacted only when there is a problem at school, or if school personnel are striving to develop a strong line of communication with the parents.

To examine this, the National Center for Education Statistics has been conducting the National Education Longitudinal Study of 1988. They have found that:

- Parents of 12th-grade students reported that they were more likely to be contacted by school personnel regarding the academic performance of their child than about their child's behavior.
- Parents of seniors in private schools were more likely than those with children in public schools to be called to request volunteer services or to discuss their child's post-high school plans, while parents of public school high school seniors were more likely to be contacted about their child's attendance.
- Parents of white seniors were more likely than those of black, Hispanic, or Asian seniors to be asked to volunteer at school. Black parents were more likely than white or Hispanic parents to be contacted by school personnel to inform them about helping their child with school work.
- Parent of seniors in low-income (41 percent or more students receiving free or reduced lunch) schools were more likely to be contacted regarding their child's academic performance or academic program.
- Parents in rural schools were the least likely to be contacted about their child's attendance, and parents in urban schools were the least likely to be contacted by school personnel requesting parent volunteers.
- Parents who had a bachelor's degree or higher or whose child's achievement test scores were in the highest quartile were more likely to be called by school personnel regarding their child's post-high school plans and to be asked to volunteer at school than were other parents.

(Source: The Condition of Education, 1995, U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics)

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How to Get Information from Your Child's School

Parents often have concerns about how their child is doing in school and are not sure what they should do about it. It is important for parents to get as much information as they can from the school in order to ease their worries. This includes asking for scores, anecdotal information from teachers, and interpretations and recommendations from everyone. Schools keep a permanent record on each child which includes various test scores and sometimes information from teachers.

If you are concerned about your child, you should insist on seeing the records in your child's file. This can provide answers to your questions and prompt the school to look for a solution to your child's problems. It is important to remember, however, not to blame or attack the school. Instead, seek cooperation with the school in finding a solution for your child.

Helpful Guidelines to Remember:

- Gather information from the school and other professionals;
- Focus on meeting your child's needs rather than blaming someone;
- Seek help in analyzing the issues by finding books and people who can provide guidance;
- Design a program that aims to help your child and involves the home and school; and
- Be willing to work on problem areas over many months, as it takes time to overcome many difficulties.

(Source: "How to Get Information from Your Child's School." *The ERIC Parent Reader*, Spring 1996, pp. 1-2, 6.)

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What Makes Our Kids Underachievers?

Many children get identified as "underachievers" in school. But what does it mean to be an underachiever? While this is not a simple question to answer, some of the factors which may lead to underachievement in school can be grouped into four areas: physical, environmental, emotional, and intellectual factors.

Physical Factors

- Children may have sight or hearing problems
- Any chronic or persistent illness (asthma, allergies) can affect children due to missing school lessons

Environmental Factors

- Poor or inappropriate instruction (too few options or variety)
- Lack of experiences at home (poverty reduces opportunities, parents have little time to spend with children in activities)

Emotional Factors

- Children who do not do well in school may feel ignored, out-of-place, or dumb
- Children who are under stress may not be able to do well in school

Intellectual Factors

- Lack of intelligence can lead to underachievement in school, although this is rarely the case, as almost every underachiever can do better with the right kind of help

It is important to remember, however, that underachievement is not caused by any single factor. It is usually the result of several factors working together.

(Source: "What Makes Our Kids Underachievers?" *The ERIC Parent Reader*, Spring 1996, pp.1, 5-6.)

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Global Learning and Observation to Benefit the Environment (GLOBE)

The Global Learning and Observation to Benefit the Environment (GLOBE) program began two years ago. Designed to link today's and tomorrow's scientists by asking students in participating schools to gather data to send to scientists (at, for example, NASA or the Environmental Protection Agency) through the Internet.

Students providing data on the weather can see the evidence of their work on a colorful world weather map updated daily on the Internet.

Participating schools include 2,000 in the United States and schools in 34 other countries. Participation in the program, sponsored by the government, is free. The program includes a 3-day workshop for teachers. Schools must provide computers, a modem, and scientific instruments.

To find out how to start the program at your child's school, write to:

The GLOBE Program
Dept. P
744 Jackson Place
Washington, DC 20503
(800) 858-9947

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"Math is Everywhere" Contest

Reading Rainbow, the award-winning PBS television show is sponsoring a "Math is Everywhere" contest for children between the ages of 5 and 8. Submit essays of 100 words or less describing how you use math in everyday life. Examples of everyday math might include: measuring ingredients for a recipe, counting the coins needed to buy a sheet of stickers, or even counting the number of cars that go by when the family is driving down the highway. The contest deadline is November 15, 1996, and entries may be accompanied by illustrations.

A panel of judges will select the top 10 entries based on creativity and originality. Every child who enters will receive a certificate of merit.

To enter, send your essay along with your name, address, and phone number to: Reading Rainbow
"Math is Everywhere" Contest
411 Park St.
Upper Montclair, NJ 07043

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Does Your Back-to-School Checklist Include an Eye Exam?

According to the Better Vision Institute, one in four children has an undetected eye problem that may lead to difficulties in learning and in school. However, because children who have trouble seeing or focusing on an object like the blackboard may think they are seeing the same thing their peers see, they may not tell their parents they are not seeing clearly. In addition, while children often are screened in elementary schools, most of the techniques used detect only 20 to 30 percent of vision disorders in children. As a result, to ensure that children can see properly, parents should learn to detect the early signs of vision disorders and schedule comprehensive exams.

Some Signs to Look for:

- Squinting, closing, or covering one eye;
- Excessive blinking or rubbing of the eyes;
- Dislike or avoidance of close work;
- Placing the head close to a book while reading;
- Losing one's place while reading;
- Complaints of headaches, nausea, and dizziness;
- Excessive clumsiness; and
- Turning or tilting the head to one side.

(Source: "Here's one often-neglected back-to-school essential." *South Florida Parenting*, August 1996, pp. 44-45.)

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Sports Lift Self-Esteem in Young Athletes

Have you ever thought about how participation in sports is helping your child's development other than physically? Researchers across the country have found that participation in sports boosts self-esteem and motivation among child athletes.

In more than 60 studies conducted at the University of Oregon, it has been consistently demonstrated that self-esteem and perceptions of physical abilities can predict achievement, motivation, and positive emotions.

Similarly, in a survey of social workers, law enforcement officials, and educators from across the U. S., it was reported that participants in sports earn better grades, behave better in the classroom, have fewer behavior problems outside the classroom, drop out significantly less, and attend school on a regular basis.

In fact, nonparticipants in sports have been found to be:

- 57 percent more likely to drop out of school,
- 49 percent more likely to use drugs,
- 37 percent more likely to be teen parents,
- 35 percent more likely to smoke cigarettes, and
- 27 percent more likely to have been arrested.

One researcher notes that sports can provide an achievement arena for children and that learning to achieve in that setting can teach children life skills such as how to communicate, commit, and collaborate, if the coaches and parents are supportive and reinforce those skills so that they transfer to other settings. Structuring the team setting so children learn skills and helping them use those skills in other areas will increase the children's confidence.

(Source: "Sports lift esteem in young athletes." *American Psychological Association Monitor*, July 1996, p. 34.)

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National TV Series on Parenting to Air in Fall

While parenting can be just as rewarding as it is challenging for most people, it is often difficult because of the many demands facing families today. With fewer resources and less time, parents often don't have many places to turn for the support and encouragement they need. However, a national PBS television series and outreach project, called Parenting Works!, has been designed to help families with preschool children--particularly those at risk of failure when they get to school--raise their children.

Parenting Works! is a 13-part series of half-hour weekly programs that bring together families, friends, and educators to share ideas, tips, and stories to make parenting work for families of young children.

Each program will highlight daily experiences of one family, followed by a discussion in which parents ask questions, share similar experiences, and suggest solutions. The host will offer viewers tips on the current topic. Each program will end with a toll-free number that parents can call for more information or for a referral to a parenting support group in their area.

Topics include:

- morning and bedtime routines,
- good nutrition,
- sibling rivalry,
- safety,
- praise and punishment,
- raising a child alone,
- finding child care, and
- parenting a child with special needs.

Contact:

Tina Bachemin
415-553-2238 (for press release)

OR

Check your local listings

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Long-Term Effects of Absent Fathers

Even while the importance of being an active father is becoming more recognized, the problem of absent fathers is growing and having long-range effects on children, according to new research findings by the National Fatherhood Initiative (NFI).

The NFI was started in 1994 to deal with the growing problem of absent fathers. The organization's June 1996 publication, "Father Facts 2", reports that in 1986, the United States became the leader in fatherless families, passing Sweden. By 1996, nearly 27 percent of American families were headed by a single parent, most being women.

They also found that:

- 18 percent of white children, 28 percent of Hispanic children, and 53 percent of black children in the U. S. live with their mother only.
- Children who live away from their fathers are 4.3 times more likely to smoke cigarettes as teenagers and more likely to use alcohol or marijuana than their peers who live with their fathers.
- Boys from mother-only households exhibit greater aggression than their peers from mother-father households.
- The likelihood of a family falling below the poverty line doubled during the first four months of a fathers absence.
- Nearly one in five children living in female-headed households hasn't seen his/her father for five years.
- Teens living in single-parent homes were more likely to commit suicide than their peers.

The researchers point out that the fathering deficit is also increasingly evident as well in two-parent homes, as many fathers worry that their jobs interfere with child-rearing. They found that men complaining that their work conflicted with their family responsibilities rose from 12 percent in 1977 to 72 percent in 1989.

(Source: "Research confirms the risks associated with growing up in a fatherless home." *APA Monitor*, August 1996, p. 6)

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Does Moving Have a Harmful Impact on Children?

In today's society of downsizing and mergers, families often face the prospect of moving to find or keep their jobs. According to recent U. S. Census Bureau data, each year, more than 9 million children are uprooted as 17 percent of American families change residence. Is this harmful to children?

In seeking the answer to this question, research has shown that:

- Moving can produce effects later in life for at-risk children who lag in school, have social adjustment problems, or who move because of family crises such as divorce.
- Among most children, moving strains are often short-term, although adolescents are hit hardest.
- At-risk children given specialized attention in their new school adapt better than those left to fend for themselves.

Adolescents appear to be affected most because of the importance of peer relationships during this time. The researchers found that adolescents were concerned most about leaving friends and not graduating from high school with their old classmates. In addition, adolescents who felt rejected after a move, were found to lose self-esteem and were then less likely to participate in extracurricular activities, thus further isolating themselves in the new community.

However, these researchers point out that parents must be cautious about overestimating the risk of moving. In general, the short-term strains of moving disappear, so parents shouldn't overreact, such as by holding their child back a grade in the new school if the child's grades are fine.

Suggestions for adults when re-locating a family:

- Give adolescents three months notice of an upcoming move;
- Minimize other upheavals in family life;
- Involve the children in the move with projects, such as gathering information about the new location;
- Move during the summer, if possible, to minimize school stresses;
- Be aware of your own stress level and don't take on more than you can handle; and
- Help teenagers explore social opportunities in the new environment and resist the temptation to be overprotective.

(Source: "Moving Appears Hardest on Adolescents." *APA Monitor*, August 1996, p. 10.)

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Summaries/Reviews of Books for Parents

Office of Child Support Enforcement. 1995. Giving Hope and Support to America's Children: Handbook on Child Support Enforcement. Washington, DC: Office of Child Support Enforcement.

This handbook is a "how-to" guide to help parents get the child support payments their children need and deserve. The book is written in a question and answer format. Chapter 1 provides information on child support enforcement problems, how parents can get help, and the basic fees and steps in getting child support. Chapter 2 presents information on finding the noncustodial parent. Chapter 3 deals with establishing paternity, and discusses the benefits of establishing paternity and the problems associated with the father being in military or high school. Chapter 4 discusses the obligations related to establishing the support order. Detailed information is given on situations such as divorce, joint custody agreement, remarriage, parent in jail, and financial difficulties. Chapter 5 deals with enforcing support problems raised by different kinds of financial situations. Chapter 6 discusses the difficulties faced by custodial parents who live in a different state from the parent who is obligated to pay child support. A glossary of child support terms, a list of state child support offices, and a list of regional offices of child support enforcement are appended.

Greenstein, Doreen, and Others. 1995. Backyards and Butterflies: Ways to Include Children with Disabilities in Outdoor Activities. Cambridge, MA: Brookline Books. Available form Brookline Books, P. O. Box 1047, Cambridge, MA 02238 ($14.95). ISBN-57129-001-7

This source book is designed for children, parents, and families, detailing ideas for outdoor play and learning activities, with an emphasis on involving children with disabilities in outdoor play. A rural perspective runs throughout the guide, although each chapter contains ideas for making outdoor environments more accessible and safer for all children, in urban and rural settings. Safety messages are included as well throughout the book. The outdoor play ideas are intended as starting points to be changed around special family needs. The activity categories are:

1. garden;
2. nature;
3. animals;
4. wheels;
5. swings;
6. backyard; and
7. measurements and materials, including balls, bolts, buckets, dowels, glues, handles/knobs, lumber/plywood, plastic, tie wraps, and Velcro.

Illustrations of children involved in outdoor activities are included throughout.

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Notable Newsletters

Daughters: A Newsletter for Parents of Girls Ages 8 to 18

This newsletter is for parents of daughters ages 8 to 18. It is a product of many experts (psychologists, nutritionists, physicians, teachers and parents) who write about their areas of expertise. Topics focus on how to build a stronger parent-daughter relationship. Columns from the March/April 1996 issue include "Can We Talk" (a discussion about improving communications with your adolescent daughter), "Mind, Body, & Food" (discusses the need for girls to learn about the strength of their inner beauty to build their self-esteem), "It Works for Me" (offers suggestions to girls that adults find helpful and practical), "Good Reading" (suggested books), and "Parents You Should Know" (relates experiences of other parents and suggestions for lessons they have taught their daughters). Other features include a Q & A column in which readers' questions are answered by professionals. Subscription price is $25 for 8 issues.

Contact:

Daughters
1808 Ashwood Avenue
Nashville, TN 37212

Learning Disabilities Association Newsbriefs

This newsletter is published by LDA, Learning Disabilities Association, whose purpose is to advance the education and general welfare of children of normal or potentially normal intelligence who have learning disabilities of a perceptual, conceptual, or coordinative nature. It includes various items of interest on learning disabilities such as a Parent Information Column, a Washington Update, news from Across the States, a Calendar of Events, Classifieds, and articles relating to learning disabilities. The subscription price is $13.50/year.

Contact:

LDA
4156 Library Road
Pittsburgh, PA 15234

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NETWorking: Other Gopher and WWW Sites to Visit

Name: HOME WORK

Description: HOME WORK provides parents with information for home use to support the learning and healthy development of their children. HOME WORK is a database of materials which are appropriate for use without professional guidance. Materials are available under 6 categories:

1. caring for yourself as the foundation of good parenting,
2. understanding the healthy development and safety of your child,
3. guiding your child's behavior,
4. nurturing the healthy development and safety of your child,
5. motivating your child to learn, and
6. advocating to others for your child's best interest.

Address: http://www.cyfernet.mes.umn.edu:2400/homework.html

Name: FatherNet

Description: FatherNet is an electronic continuation of "Family Re-Union III: The Role of Men in Children's Lives," a national conference on family policy. FatherNet includes the conference proceedings as well as related research, policy, and opinion documents to inform users about the various social, economic, and policy factors that support and hinder men's involvement in the lives of children. Other features are: an electronic bulletin board, articles and essays, programs and services, newsletters, and a reference list of community-focused, parenting/child development-related, social/cultural-related, and general information materials related to fathering and fatherhood.

Address: http://www.cyfc.umn.edu/fathernet.htp

Name: Families and Education

Description: This site provides information and ideas to help parents understand how schools and other educational programs work, how children learn, and how parents and families can best contribute to the learning process. Features include: the brochure series "Parents ASK..." in English and Spanish, and documents related to parent involvement.

Address: http://www.famed.org/

Name: Alliance for Parental Involvement (ALLPIE)

Sponsor: Alliance for Parental Involvement (ALLPIE) in Education, Inc.

Description: ALLPIE is a nonprofit organization which assists and encourages parental involvement in all types of schooling including public, private, and at-home. The site includes a conference calendar, a sample of the ALLPIE newsletter, and information on how to access their extensive resource lending library on parenting, parent involvement, and home schooling.

Address: http://www.croton.com/allpie/

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Organizations of Interest to Parents

Cesareans/Support Education and Concern

Cesareans/Support Education and Concern (C/SEC) is a not-for-profit organization whose goal is to provide emotional support for cesarean delivery families; share information on cesarean childbirth, cesarean prevention, and vaginal birth after cesarean; and change attitudes and policies that affect cesarean childbirth. C/SEC advocates for families experiencing cesarean birth to have the same opportunities given to vaginal births, such as including the father's presence at the birth, rooming in, and sibling visits. C/SEC publishes a newsletter and several books and pamphlets on cesarean births.

Contact:

Cesareans/Support Education and Concern
22 Forest Road
Framingham, MA 01701
(508) 877-8266

National Coalition of Advocates for Students

The National Coalition of Advocates for Students (NCAS) is a private not-for-profit coalition of educational advocacy organizations that work to improve schools on behalf of students traditionally underserved. These include students of color, immigrants, students from low-income families, and special needs students. The organization maintains CHIME (Clearinghouse for Immigrant Education) that serves schools, parents, advocates, and others who support the education of immigrant children. NCAS for Students also publishes a newsletter *New Voices*.

Contact:

National Coalition of Advocates for Children
100 Boylston Street
Suite 737
Boston, MA 02116
Phone: (617) 57-8507
Toll Free: (800) 441-7192
Fax: (617) 357-9549
E-mail: heartkey@aol.com

National Organization for Rare Disorders

The National Organization for Rare Disorders (NORD) is a private not-for-profit organization dedicated to helping people with rare disorders and assisting organizations that serve them. Each rare disorder affects fewer than 200,000 people in the United States, and because of this, the pharmaceutical industry was reluctant to develop drugs for the disorders because of their limited commercial value. NORD functions as a clearinghouse serving public and medical professionals, answering more than 100,000 questions each year. NORD puts families with the same disorders in touch with each other. Articles on over 4,000 rare diseases are available from NORD.

Contact:

National Organization for Rare Disorders, Inc.
P.O. Box 8923
New Fairfield, CT 06812-8923
Phone: (203) 746-6518
Toll Free: (800) 999-6673
Fax: (203) 746-6481

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The PARENTING Calendar

CONFERENCE: Weaving a National Commitment: New Challenges and Strategies for Protecting Children

Date: September 16-21, 1996

Place: Washington Hilton and Towers Hotel, 1919 Connecticut Avenue NW, Washington, D.C.

Description: This is the 11th Annual National Conference on Child Abuse and Neglect. The conference will bring together the viewpoints of diverse communities, professional disciplines, and public policy makers through workshops, skills seminars, roundtables, think tanks, adjunct meetings, a film festival, exhibits and networking sessions.

Keynote speaker will be Jonathan Kozol, author of many books including *Amazing Grace*, a documentary of poverty and racial isolation in the South Bronx. Donna E. Shalala, Secretary of the Department of Health and Human Services will deliver welcoming remarks.

Contact:

The 11th Annual National Conference on Child Abuse and Neglect, Research Assessment, Inc.
1300 Spring Street, Suite 210
Silver Spring, MD 20910,
Phone: (301) 589-8242
Fax: (301) 589-8246

CONFERENCE: Restoring Fatherhood, Renewing Families

Date: September 24, 1996

Place: Indiana Convention Center
Indianapolis, IN

Description: This is a conference aimed at bringing together fatherhood programs from across the country to learn firsthand how they can be replicated in Indiana. Community leaders from across Indiana are invited to join the effort with the governor to develop community-based initiatives that can make a difference in strengthening the commitments of fathers to their families.

Contact:

Toll Free Phone 1-888-661-DADS (3237)
(Registration is limited to the first 1200 people)

CONFERENCE: In the Best Interests of the Child: Parental Access in the Changing Family

Date: October 4-5, 1996

Place: Pine Manor College, Chestnut Hill, Massachusetts

Description: Judith Wallerstein, the founder of the Center for the Family in Transition will be the featured speaker at this conference.

Contact: M.A.G.A.L.
P. O. Box 331
Dedham, MA 02026
Phone: 617-329-9729

CONFERENCE: The Power Within: Strengthening Our Communities

Date: October 8-11, 1996

Place: New Orleans

Description: This is the 26th annual conference of the National Black ChilD Development Institute.

Contact:

Vicki Pinkston
1023 15th Street, N. W.
Suite 600
Washington, DC 20005
Phone: 1-202-387-1281

CONFERENCE: Changing Conceptions of Giftedness

Date: October 30-November 3, 1996

Place: Indianapolis Convention Center, Hyatt Regency Hotel/Westin Hotel, Indianapolis, Indiana

Description: This is the 43rd Annual Convention of the National Association for Gifted Children. Classroom teachers, educators, administrators, coordinators, guidance counselors, and parents are invited to attend to focus on topics such as educational reform, computers and technology, advocacy, equity and excellence, psychosocial needs, cognitive thinking skills, standards, authentic assessments, challenging and differentiated core curriculum, creativity, ability grouping, and gifted children in the regular classroom.

Contact:

National Association for Gifted Children
1707 L Street, NW Suite 550
Washington, DC 20036
(202) 785-4268

CONFERENCE: Breaking the IQ Barrier! Emotional & Multiple Intelligences in the Classroom

Date: November 7-8, 1996

Place: Colonial Hilton & Resort, Lynnfield, Massachusetts

Description: Two of the leading experts in the field of psychology and education join forces to present a two-day conference on the changing paradigms of intelligence in our society. Howard Gardner, author of Multiple Intelligences: The Theory in Practice and Daniel Goleman, author of Emotional Intelligence--Why It Can Matter More Than IQ, will present their perspectives on how traditional views of intelligence limit our thinking and lower our expectations of children's true skills and abilities. They will be joined by educators from around the country who are implementing new paradigms of cognitive and emotional development in their schools.

Contact:

Susan Plant, Conference Coordinator
Phone: 1-800-453-7461
Fax: 914-937-9327

CONFERENCE: Renewing Our Sense of Community

Date: December 4-7, 1996

Place: Hyatt Regency, Minneapolis, MN

Description: This is the 31st Annual Conference of the National Community Education Association.

Contact:

National Community Education Association
3929 Old Lee Highway, Suite 91-A
Fairfax, VA 22030-2401
Phone: (703) 359-8973
Fax: (703) 359-0972

CONFERENCE: National Head Start Association's 13th Annual Parents Training Conference

Date: December 6-9, 1996

Place: Houston, Texas

Description: Parents of children in Head Start Programs are invited to attend this workshop and conference on concerns of parenting and education such as child growth and development, communicating with the young child, health concerns, cultural diversity and ethnic sensitivity in Head Start, computers in the Head Start classroom, and methods for disciplining children.

Contact:

National Head Start Association
1651 Prince Street
Alexandria, VA 22314
Phone: 703-739-0875
Fax: 703-739-0878

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National Parent Information Network

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Parent's Guide to the Internet and Guidelines to Internet Safety

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To many parents, the Internet appears to be a completely new world where their children feel comfortable while they are overwhelmed. The purpose of this recent *USA TODAY* series was to provide a guide for parents to the different areas of "cyberspace" including the risks of each area, along with a discussion of guidelines to deal with parental issues and concerns. This is extremely important as 40% of U. S. households last year had computers, and 25% of children over 16 in the U.S. and Canada report on-line access, according to Nielsen Media Research.

The Parent's Guide to the Internet

So, how can parents provide rules and guidelines to something they aren't very familiar with? This article presents a guide to some of the key areas of the Internet along with possible hazards of each.

- **E-mail:** Electronic mail (or e-mail) is probably the on-line feature used the most. Whether or not parents should screen their children's e-mail is an individual decision and depends on the children's ages and the family's views on privacy. Families should apply whatever standard they use with their children's other mail.

- **The Web:** The Web (or World Wide Web) is generally what people are talking about when they say they are "surfing the Net." The Web is made up of colorful, magazine-like pages viewable with software called a "browser." One way to get to a page is to type its address. Once you're on the Web, the faster way to navigate is to use its point-and-click navigation system where you click on any highlighted "link" and jump to another page. While many sites may contain explicit and inappropriate material, most "surfers" rarely stumble across such sites.

- **Search Engines:** While the Net and the Web may contain a massive amount of information, it does not mean that it is easy to find what you're looking for. Many sites offer "search engines" which let users fill out a form to search, although usually thousands of matches are found. Parents are advised not to show children under 6 to 8 years of age how to use a search engine since many of these matches are likely to be inappropriate. If your child wants to find a particular site, parents should search themselves and then provide the child with a list of acceptable sites to explore. Also, some Web directories are being designed for kids ages 8-14, such as Yahooligans (http://www.yahooligans.com) .

- **Chat Rooms:** On-line chat rooms offer instant interaction and the ability to "talk" with a group a few lines at time. Chat rooms are difficult to monitor, however, because the conversation is transmitted in seconds to everyone. Because of this, chat rooms have been ranked the most danger-prone areas for kids on-line. Some chat rooms, however, have been specifically designated for kids, and many are very safe and monitored. For parents, the most important guideline is to make sure that their children understand how important it is never to give out personal information so they cannot be located.

- **Newsgroups:** Internet newsgroups (or Usenet newsgroups) are a collection of special-interest bulletin boards on about 20,000 topics, ranging from computers to TV shows to religion. Internet newsgroups can be dangerous because many contain inappropriate images or photos. If parents determine that a group is appropriate for their child, however, they should make sure the child reads the group's FAQ (frequently asked questions) and knows the rules of "netiquette" for participating.

Parental Concerns and Guidelines

While most parents whose kids go on-line know that they need to provide some supervision, they aren't sure what this means. Parents are concerned about limiting what their children can access as well as how much time their children spend on the computer. Other issues parents should be aware of include:

- unpleasant interactions--many people on the Net are rude and if children get insulted (or "flamed"), they might have their feelings hurt
- disruptive behavior--despite feelings of invisibility on-line, children need to be aware that any misbehavior or lack of following an on-line services rules could lead to cancellation of the family account
- misinformation--children must be cautioned that not everything on-line is true, as much of the information is the opinions of random users.

To deal with these issues and concerns, several guidelines are provided in this article.

"Safety Guidelines for Parents and Children"

- Never give out personal information such as home address, phone number, or the name of your school without their permission
- Don't send pictures without permission
- Never give anyone your password, on or off-line
- Never meet a person you've talked to on-line without a parent present, or specific permission
- Don't allow young children on-line late at night
- Don't respond to inappropriate or offensive messages

"Age Appropriate Guidelines"

Young Children (3-10) often do not understand many aspects of using the Internet, so they **should**:

- **be** given time limits
- **be** allowed access to kid chatrooms
- **be** allowed their own screen persona
- **not** be allowed unsupervised use
- **not** have their own password

Preteens (10-12) still need limits on where they can go and when they should come back just like riding their bike around your neighborhood, so they **should**:

- **be** allowed their own screen persona
- **be** allowed access to kid chatrooms
- **be** given time limits
- **not** have their own password
- **not** have unsupervised use of on-line services
- **not** have access to member chatrooms
- **not** have access to instant messages
- **not** have access to Internet newsgroups
- **not** have unsupervised access to the Internet

Adolescents (12-15) will require an open discussion with parents to know which areas of the Internet are acceptable and which are not, so that they can understand what you will tolerate, so they **should**:

- **be** allowed their own screen persona
- **be** allowed access to kid chatrooms
- **be** given time limits

- **be** allowed unsupervised use of on-line services
- **not** have their own password
- **not** have access to member chatrooms
- **not** have access to instant messages
- **not** have access to Internet newsgroups
- **not** have unsupervised access to the Internet

For those parents who believe, however, that verbal or written guidelines are not enough, a growing array of "parental control" technology is now available. Many commercial on-line services offer easy-to-use controls that let parents selectively block access to certain parts of the service, some can block everything but children's areas, or some can monitor where kids have been while on-line.

For families with direct Internet access, software can be bought which puts similar controls directly on the home computer. However, some technically oriented children can get around some blocking software. For parents who are considering blocking software, it is important to read the reviews and find out what experiences other families have had using it. Parents should ask if the softwear will effectively block what you want blocked and still let things in that you want your children to have access to. If the answer is no, the softwear may not be worth the cost or the time to maintain it on your computer.

Nevertheless, because there's so much potential for good on-line (exploring, learning, making friends from all over the world), most experts agree that on-line access is worth the risks. The key for parents is not to try to prevent anything upsetting from ever happening, but rather being the person that your child can tell about it without threatening "You're not going on-line anymore."

(Source: "Kids On-Line: A Three-Part Series," *USA TODAY*, August 27-29, 1996. Copyright 1996, *USA TODAY*. Reprinted with permission. Entire series is available on-line at: http://usatoday.com/life/lfront.htm)

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Satellite Town Meeting 1996-1997 Series Schedule Announced

The 1996-1997 US Department of Education Satellite Town Meeting Series Schedule has been released. The Department of Education produces the Satellite Town Meeting series in partnership with the National Alliance of Business and the Center for Workforce Preparation with support from Proctor and Gamble. To participate in the Satellite Town Meeting, contact your local Public Broadcasting System (PBS) member station, Chamber of Commerce, or Johnson Controls branch office and ask if your group can use the facility as a downlink site. Other possible sites are: local schools, public libraries, community colleges, cable television stations, universities and technical colleges, government offices, hospitals, businesses, hotels, or even private residences with satellite dishes.

Satellite coordinates are as follows:

C-Band: Galaxy 9, Orbital Location 123 degrees West; Transponder 1; Vertical Polarity; Channel 1; Downlink Frequency 3720 MHz; Audio Subcarriers 6.2 MHz (Spanish) and 6.8 MHz (English)

Ku-Band: SBS-6, Orbital Location 74 degrees West; Transponder 17; Horizontal Polarity; Channel 17; Downlink Frequency 12120 MHz; Audio Subcarriers 6.2 MHz (Spanish) and 6.8 MHz (English).

1996-1997 Series Schedule

Tuesday, October 15, 1996 at 8:00 p.m. (Eastern Time) "Technology and Teacher Leadership: 21st Century Teachers"

Tuesday, November 19, 1996 at 8:00 p.m. (Eastern Time) "Schools as Safe Havens: Discipline, Safety, and Truancy Prevention"

Tuesday, January 21, 1997 at 8:00 p.m. (Eastern Time) "The New American High School: Preparing Youth for Colleges and Careers"

Tuesday, February 18, 1997 at 8:00 p.m. (Eastern Time) "Making Colleges More Accessible"

Tuesday, March 18, 1997 at 8:00 p.m. (Eastern Time) "School-to-Work Opportunities: Workplaces as Learning Environments"

Tuesday, April 15, 1997 at 8:00 p.m. (Eastern Time) "Charter Schools, Magnet Schools, and Other Choices in Public Education"

Tuesday, May 20, 1997 at 8:00 p.m. (Eastern Time) "Becoming a Reading, Literate Society"

Tuesday, June 17, 1997 at 8:00 p.m. (Eastern Time) "Ready to Learn: Preparing Young Children for School Success"

For more information or to register for participation, contact: 1-800-USA-LEARN

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Hispanic Dropout Rate Becoming a National Crisis

The following article is reprinted with permission from WCER Highlights, published by the Wisconsin Center for Education Research, UW-Madison School of Education.

The school dropout rate for Hispanic students has remained a consistent problem over the past 40 years and, as recently as 1993, about 30 percent of the United States' Hispanic population ages 16 to 24 had dropped out of school. This is in comparison to an overall rate of 11 percent, an 8 percent rate for white non-Hispanics, and a 13 percent rate for African-Americans.

Nevertheless, in spite of their improved educational attainment rates over the last 10 years, Hispanics continue to enter school later, leave school earlier, and receive proportionally fewer high school diplomas and college degrees than other Americans. In fact, Hispanics are still among the most undereducated segment of the US population.

This is causing increasing concern among many educators as the Hispanic population grows dramatically, and it will be a disaster for a large percentage of the labor force to lack a high school education. According to Dr. Walter Secada, director of the Hispanic Dropout Project (HDP), "An undereducated and underskilled Hispanic workforce is harmful not only to Hispanics who drop out, but to the American economy and larger non-Hispanic population as well."

The HDP has published a *Data Book*, which shows the scope of the Hispanic dropout problem, its causes, and its consequences. According to the *Data Book*, social and economic costs are escalating for many reasons:

- the Hispanic population is rapidly growing, in both absolute numbers and as a proportion of US students
- fewer dropouts will find employment in future workplaces
- upgraded workforce skills are critical for an individual's and the nation's successes in the global economy
- people need increasingly more advanced knowledge and skills to participate in this society, to vote intelligently, and to make intelligent consumer decisions
- labor force productivity and income must expand to help meet the needs of senior citizens as they continue to make up a larger segment of our population
- children of the future will be strongly affected by their parents' income and education levels

The purpose of the HDP is to increase awareness of the nature and scope of Hispanic dropout problem, to produce concrete analyses of the issues and integrate research on intervention, and to recommend federal, state, and local level actions which can be taken to reduce the dropout rate of Hispanic youth.

In one paper written for the HDP, it has been argued that many Hispanic youth drop out because they realize that, no matter how hard they work, they will still get funneled into low-paying jobs, or even no jobs at all. These beliefs become such actions as: withdrawing from academic pursuits, acting up in class, ignoring assignments and homework, cutting class, and eventually dropping out. These behaviors have been attributed to students' lack of self-discipline, dullness, laziness, or an inability to project themselves into the future.

However, studies of these students' beliefs show that their unwillingness to participate comes from their assessment of the costs and benefits of "playing the game." That is, they think that their chances are too low that school will propel them to success to make the effort worthwhile. In addition, parents of many Hispanic students have argued that the facilities used by these students are aging and inadequate.

The Hispanic Dropout Project has found some signs of success with dropout prevention programs. Retention efforts for junior high and high school students use out-of-school efforts such as tutoring, mentoring, career advising, and arranging for older students (who might otherwise drop-out) to work with younger ones. Other in-school efforts include school restructuring and eliminating ability tracking. Elementary schools have focused on increased academic achievement for Hispanics.

For the sites that have been successful, high academic standards and strong social support for students to achieve are common characteristics. In addition, for students still in school with friends who had dropped out, a distinguishing characteristic was that someone--parent, family member, teacher, coach, counselor--had taken an individual interest in their finishing school.

For more information about the Hispanic Dropout Project, contact:

Josefina Velasco
Special Assistant to the OBEMLA Director
(202) 205-8706
josefina_velasco@ed.gov

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College Costs Rising while Household Income Declines

A recent report by the General Accounting Office (GAO) has found that during the past 15 years, tuition increases have outpaced household income gains by a 3-to-1 margin. According to the GAO, the average tuition for undergraduate students at public four-year colleges has increased 234 percent since 1980, while the average household income rose only 82 percent.

The two factors most responsible for the rise in tuition were:

1. increases in school expenditures and,
2. schools' greater dependency on tuition as a source of revenue.

The increase in school's expenditures is largely attributed to instruction, administration, and research expenditures. In fact, faculty salaries rose 97 percent during this period. At the same time, the share of schools' revenue provided by tuition rose from 16 percent to 23 percent, as the share of revenue derived from state appropriations fell by 14 percent.

While there were wide variations in tuition, the average tuition at four-year public universities for the 1995-1996 year was $2865, up from $804 in 1980-1981. The highest state average tuition was found in Vermont ($5521), while Hawaii had the lowest state average ($1524). These variations can be partly accounted for by states' levels of support.

Other findings from the GAO report include the folowwing:

- Pell Grants have not kept up with tuition as the average Pell Grant in 1994-1995 was $409 (a 72% increase from 1980-1981), but tuition increased 3 times as fast during the same period
- Higher tuition, along with fewer grants, have forced many families to rely on more student loans to pay for college (the average student loan rose from $518 in fiscal 1980 to $2417 in fiscal 1995)
- Colleges have been forced to spend more to keep high-quality faculty because of increased competition among institutions and to comply with federal mandates

Finally, while the GAO report did not offer ways that colleges could reduce tuition and costs, it did find that several colleges are offering incentives to students who graduate in four years, or are reducing the number of credits needed to graduate. However, little evaluation has been conducted to determine the effectiveness of these practices.

Free copies of this report ("Higher Education: Tuition Increasing Faster than Household Income and Public Colleges' Costs") are available from:

General Accounting Office
PO BOX 6015
Gaithersburg, MD 20994-6015
Cite report number GAO/HEHS-96-154
or e-mail info@www.gao.gov
or http://w ww.gao.gov/monthly.list/august/aug963.htm

(Source: "Higher Education: Tuition Increasing Faster than Household Income and Public Colleges' Costs", Gaithersburg, MD: General Accounting Office. August 15, 1996. GAO/HEHS-96-154.

Parent News for October 1996

Years of Promise: Early Experiences Promote Learning in Children

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[The following information has been reprinted with permission from the Carnegie Corporation of New York, copyright 1996]

Having a strong preschool and primary education experience can help children avoid turning away from learning in later years. According to the Carnegie Task Force on Learning in the Primary Grades, children's long-term learning and development depend much on what happens between ages 3 and 10. During these years, children make great leaps in cognition, language acquisition, and reasoning, corresponding with dramatic neurological changes.

According to this panel, children who attend high-quality early childhood and child care programs, children who attend an elementary school that sets high learning standards, children whose parents create a home environment that encourages learning and who remain involved in their children's education throughout the years from 3 to 10, and children from communities that provide parents supportive programs all have a better chance of learning to higher levels than those who do not.

Yet, millions of children are not achieving as much or as well as they could, in school or out. According to the Carnegie Task Force, this can be accounted for by the fact that most preschool programs do not prepare children for more rigorous academic curricula found in primary grades, and the majority of early child care and education programs do not meet standards of quality. These situations are compounded for children from low-income families and of diverse cultural backgrounds, who do not receive the necessary support to move from home to school to neighborhood, and other settings.

It is important to remember, however, that underachievement is not limited to certain groups or to the poor. By fourth grade, the performance of most children in the US is below what it should be for the nation and is below the achievement levels of children in competing countries.

In fact, according to the National Assessment for Education Progress standards:

- nearly 75% of the nation's fourth graders could not meet the criteria for proficiency in reading set for their grade; 42% could not even reach the basic level of performance
- two-thirds of fourth graders could not meet the standards for persuasive writing, narrative writing, and informative writing
- in math, 82% of fourth graders could not meet the standards; 39% could not solve easy problems
- in case studies comparing performance of US urban schools with that of Asian urban schools, the average math score of fifth-grade children in only one American school was as high as that of fifth grade children in the lowest-performing Asian school.

It is important to point out, however, that today's schools are performing about as well as their parents' and teachers' schools did 25 years ago. The Task Force indicates that Americans are seeing the shortcomings of an education system that is geared to the academic success of some but not all. They argue that the first requirement in preventing widespread school failure and underachievement is for the key learning systems in children's lives to alter the basic assumption about the quality of work that children can be expected to produce, so that each child is challenged to meet high expectations for learning and achievement and is given the support necessary to succeed. It is noted, however, that families, communities, preschools, after-school programs, and the media need to be included with schools as the institutions which have an important impact on children's learning.

This panel urges the adoption of practices that work for a diverse group of children. Effective practices include:

- ensuring that children are physcially and emotionally ready to learn.
- setting high expectations
- offering varied learning activities
- building stable, trusting relationships
- responding quickly to problems
- collaborating with other institutions
- taking responsibility for results

The Task Force's recommendations are to:

1. Promote children's learning in families and communities
2. Expand high-quality early learning opportunities
3. Create effective elementary schools and school systems
4. Promote high quality children's television and access to other electronic media
5. Link the key learning institutions into a comprehensive coordinated education system

The panel emphasized that all children--low-income, limited English proficiency, minority--can meet and exceed the accepted standards of student performance. However, many children tend to encounter a disconnected array of inadequate preschool, elementary, and after-school experiences that do not prepare them with the knowledge and skills they'll need later. This leads them to lose their natural curiosity and enthusiasm to learn. The Carnegie Task Force points out that in order to change this, it will be necessary to dispel that myth that this is a problem of the children or the families. The Task Force argues that it will take investments by all to change it.

(Source: "Years of Promise: A Comprehensive Learning Strategy for America's Children", Carnegie Corporation of New York, September 1996.)

Electronic versions of the executive summary are available at: http://www.carnegie.org

Single copies of the full report are available from:

Carnegie Corporation of New York
PO Box 753
Waldorf, MD 20604
(301) 654-2742 or (212) 207-6285
Fax: (301) 843-0159
E-mail: ccny@tasco.com

All orders must be prepaid. Cost is $10.

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What's the Best Treatment for Attention Deficit Disorder?

It has been estimated that up to 5% of children in schools have attention deficit disorder (ADD). Yet, many educators believe that children are being over-diagnosed because of the subjectivity with which the disorder is perceived. In fact, according to a recent report it may take up to 10 years to definitively list the symptoms of ADD.

This can be a problem, however, as the Education Department estimates that up to 90 percent of school-age children with ADD take Ritalin or a similar drug. In addition, many of these children receive Ritalin without having any other treatments tried first because the drug is an "easy out" and many parents don't know what else to try. Yet, parents should be aware that this "quick fix" may lead to long-term problems which scientists do not yet know about. As a result, because ADD is easy to misdiagnose, some kids are not getting identified, while others are being treated inappropriately.

So, what other treatments are available for ADD? According to one elementary school principal, schools must work with parents and children to modify classroom behavior before trying Ritalin. At her school, teachers sit down with misbehaving students and their parents to map out goals. These goals might include: not interrupting the teacher, raising a hand before speaking, and interacting appropriately with peers. Students then can receive points for each completed task, such as paying attention or finishing worksheets, and can win extra time or an computer or in gym. Teachers can try to reduce stimulation around ADD children by removing mobiles and other visual distractions; seating ADD children away from water fountains, heaters, or other noisy objects; and using study carrels.

Studies have shown, however, that the best treatment for ADD is a combination of child counseling and parent training along with a drug therapy. This means including parent training with some of the child behavior modification strategies described above, student self-management, and effective teaching strategies such as unspoken signals between the student and teacher which let the ADD children know they are off-task. These strategies are particularly useful in that they allow students to stay on track without feeling embarrassed. It is important for everyone to be aware, however, that no one treatment is optimally effective for children with ADD.

For more information, contact:

Children and Adults with Attention Deficit Disorder
499 NW 70th Ave., Suite 109
Plantation, FL 33317

(Source: "Multifaceted ADD Treatment Best, Researchers Suggest," *Education Daily*, August 8, 1996, pp. 3-4).

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The Parent's Guide: Use TV to Your Child's Advantage

This book, by Dorothy G. Singer, Ed.D., Jerome L. Singer, Ph.D., and Diana Zuckerman, Ph.D., and endorsed by Fred Rogers of "Mister Rogers' Neighborhood," includes suggestions parents can use to moderate their children's television viewing experience in their homes. The book includes general information about television and parent/child activities that will be included in Parent News over the next few months.

Following are excerpts and Summaries of points in **Chapter Three: Parents' Questions about TV** (see August 1996 Parent News for Chapter 1, September 1996 Parent News for Chapter 2)

Parents concerns about TV tend to center around such issues as the scheduling of appropriate programs for children, the influence of violence and aggression, the effects of cartoons and stereotypes, the effects on imagination and language, and finally the problem of commercials. This chapter attempts to address these issues in the hope that you will recognize your own concerns or become aware of some issues that you hadn't thought about previously.

Frequently Asked Questions:

1. Can Television-Viewing Affect Vision?

   This is one of the most common parental concerns. The Society for Prevention of Blindness suggests:

   - focusing the TV so the image is clear and distinct
   - making sure the picture is steady
   - having the TV in a room that is properly lighted (not darkened, without too much contrast between the room and the screen)
   - making sure that the screen can be viewed from a comfortable distance in front of the screen (3-4 feet), not from an angle, and at eye level, not from the floor
   - resting the eyes by looking away frequently from the screen at frequent intervals

2. Who Controls the TV Set?

   Many families have quarrels over program scheduling and time limits. For the most part, children can accept family rules if they are consistently enforced by parents and if the children are given constructive alternatives. It is important for parents to stick to their beliefs and limit late night viewing or potentially disturbing shows. In addition, parents need to remind older children and baby-sitters about the family rules so they can abide by them as well.

   If your child visits a friend, however, your child might see a program of which you disapprove. While you can't always supervise your child, chances are that if you have been consistent with your rules, your child will establish viewing habits that you approve. However, parents must keep in mind that it is their responsibility to know how much time the children spend watching TV and what they are watching. Parents can't assume that another family will always show similar judgement.

3. Should Children Watch TV During Meals or When Doing Homework?

   Most educators would argue that while children might get homework done while watching TV, the division of attention prevents them from learning as effectively as when the TV is off. A good

rule to follow is having a regular schedule with time for homework followed by a regular time for TV on the condition that all homework is done.

As for eating in front of the TV, this establishes a bad habit that reinforces the children's dependence on TV, which could also lead to overeating, and breaks down family togetherness and communication. According to research findings, eating while watching TV will have an even worse effect of "hooking" children to TV.

A more useful family structure would consist of keeping young children on regular early-bedtime schedules and helping their imagination development through reading, storytelling, or play. Older children can share activities with their parents in the evening by playing board games, working on hobbies, and sharing in music or sport activities.

4. What Kind of TV Shows Should Children Watch?

As many of you already know, not all children's shows are alike. Nevertheless, research has found that heavy viewing of cartoons, some of which contain considerable violence, leads to inappropriate and disruptive behavior among children in nursery school. Among elementary school children, the heavy-cartoon viewers were rated as "unenthusiastic about school". In light of these findings, parents should become familiar with the shows presented on Saturday mornings and set rules about what shows and how many the children can watch.

Some parents claim that their otherwise active and mischievous children are quiet only when they watch TV. Yet, most research suggests that very active children become even more agitated by frequent TV viewing, especially when the material involves cartoons, action-detective programs, or noisy game shows. In fact, parents are advised to restrict active children's television viewing to shows that have been prescreened and that involve interesting material but little violence.

It is important for parents to understand how much children learn by imitation. If they can control their own TV viewing patterns and find more constructive things to do with children, they can avoid hooking children on TV. Since the material is not always appropriate for young children and may be confusing or frightening to them, parents need to point out that these are stories and may be exaggerations of problems that people face.

5. What Kinds of Beliefs and Attitudes Can Children Pick Up from TV?

Programming that deals with special problems such as adoption, alcohol, drugs, and the handicapped child can offer parents the opportunity to discuss these important issues with the children. Similarly, television can offer a family an opportunity to discuss stereotypes. Keep in mind that it is the discussion, not the viewing, that is important.

Parents should remember that banning programming which presents misrepresentations of people, family life, or culture or where offensive language is used can give the material more importance than it deserves. In addition, ignoring such material can reinforce unrealistic expectations in children.

6. What Can We Do about Commercials?

Parents need to point out how a commercial can mislead the viewer. If a parent adopts a completely negative approach to commercials, however, the children might simply become angry or frustrated. When a child wants a product because of the "free prize ," parents need to be consistent in explaining firmly but kindly why you are not going to buy the product.

Next month's *Parent News* will review and provide excerpts from Chapter 4: When You Watch and What You Watch, which is the start of the home minicourse designed to help you and your child understand how television work and how it influences your thinking.

(Source: "The Parent's Guide: Use TV to Your Child's Advantage," 1990, by Dorothy G. Singer, Jerome L. Singer, and Diana M. Zuckerman. Published by Acropolis Books Ltd.)

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Turn off Your TV Week Approaching in New Jersey

Mark your calendars if you live in New Jersey! "Turn Off Your TV Week" for all of New Jersey is scheduled for October 21 to October 27. This event is being organized by the New Jersey's Children's Museum. While the organizers of this event don't expect that you'll completely stop watching TV after this week, their goal is for children and adults to watch TV with discrimination and to help children spend their leisure time in more productive ways. Various materials are available to help organize this event in your school and home.

For more information, contact:

Dr. Anne Summers, Executive Director
New Jersey's Children's Museum
599 Industrial Avenue
Paramus, NJ 07652
(210) 262-2638

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Parent News for October 1996

How to Make the Most of Parent-Teacher Conferences

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Communication between parents and teachers is vital to help children reach their full potential in learning. Often busy schedules limit the time that parents and teachers can share information, so making the most of opportunities such as conferences becomes even more important. The editors of *Parenting for High Potential*, a new magazine published by the National Association for Gifted Children (NAGC), have compiled the following list of questions to help parents prepare for conferences with their children's teachers.

1. How is my child's class structured? What is a typical day like?
2. Does my child seem happy at school?
3. What do you see as my child's special interests and strengths? What can I do at home to help my child develop his/her talents?
4. Are there subject areas where my child needs extra help or seems less motivated? How can I assist in those areas?
5. Does my child seem challenged by the academic work or does he/she seem to complete it with little effort?
6. How does my child react to trying new things? What about his/her reaction to making mistakes?
7. How does my child interact with other children and adults? Does he/she seem well-accepted among his/her peers? Are there any behavior problems?
8. What level of parent involvement is encouraged regarding my child's homework assignments?
9. How are my child's creative thinking and problem-solving skills? What do you recommend for development of these areas?
10. What appropriate after-school opportunities are available for my child in school or community?

Parenting for High Potential is a quarterly magazine which premieres in September. The first issue features an interview with Education Secretary Richard Riley on how parents can get involved in their children's education. Each issue of the magazine will include tips from experts, reviews of books and computer software for children, and a pullout section for students.

To order the magazine, contact the National Association for Gifted Children, 1707 L Street, NW, Suite 550, Washington, DC 20036. The phone number is (202) 785-4268. PHP is a membership benefit of NAGC. Fee is $50 per year.

(Source: "Make the Most of Parent-Teacher Conferences", *Community Update*, vol. 39, September 1996).

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New Approach to the Assessment Process for Children

Has your child ever been through an assessment? If so, he or she is not alone. Over a half of million children are in early intervention programs and even more are assessed each year. Yet, parents and professionals have long been frustrated by an assessment process that failed to measure a child's true capabilities. However, new hope has arrived with a new guide, *New Visions for the Developmental Assessment of Infants and Young Children*, which was written in collaboration with parents by **Zero To Three**: National Center for Infants, Toddlers, and Families.

This guide promotes a comprehensive approach to assessment that builds on young children's strengths and capabilities rather than deficits. In addition, it encourages a more accurate understanding of how children manage the challenges of everyday life in relation to their families, communities, and culture.

According to Emily Fenichel, the associate director of **Zero To Three** and co-editor of *New Visions*, parents are encouraged to be active partners in assessments. In addition, assessment is best done in the context of "spontaneous, motivated interactions between the child and caregiver" in a setting that is comfortable to the child.

This is welcome news for those parents who have taken terrified children to assessments. In the past, children were usually separated from their parents and then expected to perform tests in an unfamiliar setting with strangers who focused on what the child could NOT do. *New Visions* attempts to reassure parents that their contributions and involvement are crucial and will be valued. In addition, *New Visions* recommends the following to ensure a more accurate assessment:

- Young children should never be separated from their parents or caregivers during the assessment, as children should not be expected to perform tests well when they are anxious about being left alone.
- Young children should never be assessed by a stranger as children should not be challenged to tests in the presence of someone they do not know.
- Formal tests or tools should not be the cornerstone of the assessment of an infant or young child, as most standardized tests are not designed to bring out the unique abilities of children with atypical or challenging developmental patterns (misleading scores could lead to inappropriate services)
- Assessments limited to areas that are easily measurable should not be considered complete (motor or cognitive skills are easy to observe but they do not provide an accurate picture of the child's total developmental capabilities)

In addition to these guidelines, the following parent tips are provided for surviving your child's developmental assessment.

1. Be the parent--You know your child better than anyone else
2. You don't need to know all the technical terms--explain in your terms what is going on with your child
3. Don't be afraid to disagree--if professionals see your child differently from you, ask for more discussion
4. Designate an ally to bring to meetings--friend or family member can provide support such as taking notes, keeping track of information, and reviewing the discussion later which can be useful if things begin to feel overwhelming

5. Understand that your level of involvement may vary--how involved you are in each stage of the process may depend on your child's needs and other life circumstances
6. Make sure that your needs are met--make your needs clear, and keep in mind that you may have to find someone else to work with to meet those needs.
7. Find support for yourself
8. Share your knowledge with others--parents who are in the process of trying to learn what you have already discovered need your help

[Reprinted with permission from **Zero To Three**. **Zero To Three** is dedicated to advancing the healthy development of America's babies and young children through training infant/family professionals, disseminating scientific and public information, and promoting policy relevant to infants, toddlers and their families.]

For professionals or parents interested in purchasing a copy of *New Visions*, call 1-800-899-4301. Price is $35 plus $4 for shipping/handling.

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"National Action Plan for the Prevention of Playground Injuries" Released

Each year more than 200,000 children are injured on America's playgrounds. To help reduce that number of injuries, the National Program for Playground Safety at the University of Iowa has released a *National Action Plan for the Prevention of Playground Injuries* as a blueprint for playground safety.

This *National Action Plan* is a detailed outline on how parents, educators, health and recreation professionals, manufacturers, and academia can work together to make playgrounds safer. The four main goals are:

- design age-appropriate playgrounds
- provide proper surfacing under and around playground equipment
- provide proper supervision on playgrounds
- properly maintain playgrounds

The *National Action Plan* emphasizes that playground safety is a complex issue that requires adults who represent various disciplines at the national, state, and local levels to work together to accomplish these goals.

Some suggestions from the action plan:

- Playgrounds should provide age-appropriate equipment; separate areas should be provided for children ages 2 to 5 and 5 to 12 to accommodate the developmental needs of those children.
- Playgrounds should provide proper surfacing under and around equipment, such as pea gravel, sand, wood chips, wood mulch or synthetic surfaces at appropriate depths as 70% of injuries on public playgrounds are related to falls to unsafe surfaces.
- Children should be supervised on playgrounds, as 40% of playground injuries are related to inadequate supervision
- Playgrounds should be properly maintained, as broken or poorly maintained equipment are involved in 30% of all playground injuries

For more information, contact:

National Program for Playground Safety
1-800-554-PLAY
or http://www.uni.edu/coe/playgrnd"http://www.uni.edu/coe/play grnd

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Researchers Seeking Divorced Fathers to Participate in Study

Researchers at the University of California, Irvine are seeking divorced fathers to complete questionnaires about their divorce experiences. All responses will be confidential. Questionnaires will take approximately 15-25 minutes to complete and can be filled out in the privacy of your own home.

If you are a divorced father or you know one, please contact the researchers at the address listed below.

Melissa Rappaport or Cynthia M. Kerr
University of California, Irvine
Department of Psychology and Social Behavior
(714) 824-7191
E-mail: mailto:cmkerr@uci.edu

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Summaries/Reviews of Books for Parents

Honig, Alice Sterling. 1996. *Behavior Guidance for Infants and Toddlers.* Little Rock, AR: Southern Early Childhood Association, P.O. Box 56130, Little Rock, AR 72215-6130 ($6 to non-members of SECA; $5 to members of SECA. Add $2 shipping). PS 024505.

This booklet provides guidance to parents regarding behavior of infants and toddlers, including behavior development and problems, giving common sense advice and practical examples. The chapters of the booklet are: (1) "Introduction: What Is Misbehavior for Babies?," discussing "crying" as an appropriate behavior for meeting physical and emotional needs, and asserting that learning some developmental tasks requires a great deal of adult assistance; (2) "Discipline vs. Punishment," asserting that discipline means "to teach" and that punishment teaches fear and defiance, often destroying self esteem; (3) "Positive Discipline Techniques with Infants and Toddlers," focusing on prevention as the optimal discipline technique--using calm tones and caresses, rewarding desired behaviors contingently, avoiding overpraise, labeling desirable behaviors, modeling behaviors, using humor, varying tempos of activities, refocusing and redirecting inappropriate actions, respecting individual temperaments, and building self-esteem.

Goetz, Kathy, Ed. 1996. *Fatherhood and Family Support.* Chicago, IL: Family Resource Coalition, 200 South Michigan Avenue, 16th Floor, Chicago, IL 60604 (Report No. 151; members, $4; non-members, $5).

On the assumption that fathers have been relatively absent from family support programs, this publication of the Family Resource Coalition addresses the role of fathers in family support programs, examines the impact of fathers on their children, and describes programs successfully involving fathers. Articles include: (1) "What's Behind the Fatherhood Debate? A Guide for Family Support Practitioners," (James A. Levine, Edward W. Pitt); (2) "Collaborating for Fathers: A County-Wide Coalition Addresses Fatherhood"; (3) "How Programs are Advocating for Father-Friendly Systems" (Dwaine Simms, Elizabeth Sandell); (4) "Child Development: The Difference a Dad Makes" (Kyle D. Pruett); (5) "Parents' Group is a Resource for Father (and Mothers): Mar Vista Family Center"; (6) "Father to Father" (Al Gore); (7) "Public Policy and Poor, Unwed Fathers: Case Studies Show Dads Aren't 'Deadbeats'" (Daniel Ash); (8) "Bringing Home Better Communication: Fathers' and Mothers' Groups Work Together in Baltimore"; (9) "Fathers and Families: Building a Framework for Research, Practice, and Policy" (Vivian Gadsden); and (10) "Con Los Padres: How One Program Encourages Father Involvement." A list of resources concludes the publication.

Doucette-Dudman, Deborah; LaCure, Jeffrey R. 1996. *Raising Our Children's Children.* Minneapolis, MN: Fairview Press, 2450 Riverside Avenue South, Minneapolis, MN 55454 ($19.95). 240p. ISBN-0-925190-91-8

There are 3.2 million children in the United States living with their grandparents or other kin, a 40 percent increase since 1980. This exploding sociological trend with far-reaching implications for our future spans every segment of our society--rich and poor, black and white, Asian and Hispanic, urban and suburban. Based on interviews with grandparents, their children, and the grandchildren, this book explores the challenges, hardships, and rewards faced by grandparents raising their children's children. Following a preface and introduction that describes the author's experience of raising a grandchild and provides a general picture of the phenomenon, the book's chapters are: (1) "The Bad Parent," on children in the middle of an adversarial relationship between their parents and grandparents; (2) "Family Secrets," contrasting how two sets of grandparents handle what they tell or do not tell their grandchildren about the situation; (3) "When Grandparents' Don't Agree," on the tensions that arise when couples bring two

different perspectives to taking in grandchildren; (4) "Healing the Wounds," on the importance of both formal and informal support for coping and mending the effects of adversarial relationships; (5) "Integrating the Birth Parent," on incorporating a relationship between the grandchild and his or her parent, regardless of the parent's problems and even if the parent is not present; (6) "Mothers in Prison," on the mothers' perspectives of having their children raised by grandparents; (7) "Guardianship--Adoption--Letting Go," on the permanence of adoption and transition issues that arise when an estranged parent returns wanting custody of the grandchild; and (9) "Grandchildren--Having Their Say," on resolving the divided loyalties inherent to being raised by grandparents. A 28-item bibliography and a list of resources for grandparents as parents are included.

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Notable Newsletters

Parenting for High Potential

Parenting for High Potential is a quarterly magazine which premieres in September. The first issue features an interview with Education Secretary Richard Riley on how parent's can get involved with their children's education. Each issue will include tips from experts, reviews of books and computer software for children, and a pullout section for students. PHP is a membership benefit of National Association for Gifted Children. Fee is $50 per year.

Contact:

National Association for Gifted Children
1707 L Street, NW
Suite 550
Washington, DC 20036
(202) 785-4268

Working Mother

Working Mother magazine is published monthly except for a combined July/August issue. It includes articles dealing with issues faced by many working mothers both at work and at home. Regular features include: Just for You, On the Job, Children, and Food and Nutrition.

Contact:

Working Mother
PO Box 5240
Harlan, IA 51593-2740
1-800-627-0690

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NETWorking: Other Gopher and WWW Sites to Visit

Name: America Goes Back to School: Get Involved!

Sponsor: U. S. Department of Education

Description: The U. S. Department of Education has on their home page all the information you need to launch an *America Goes Back to School: Get Involved* partnership in your community. The full text of the Partners' Activity Guide, including useful tips on how to involve community partners in your efforts, is available.

Address: http://www.ed.gov/Family/ag bts

Name: Working Together

Sponsor: Blue Point Books

Description: This site for working parents features the Working Together Question of the Week and the Working Together Forum. Several resources for parents are also described that deal with work and family issues experienced by many employed parents. Various statistics on working families are also included.

Address: http://www.west.net/~bpbooks /

Name: National Center for Fathering

Sponsor:

Description: The National Center for Fathering was founded in 1990 by Dr. Ken Canfield to conduct research on fathers and fathering and to develop practical resources for fathers for many parenting situations. This site features: practical tips for dads, Today's Father magazine, highlights from the 1996 National Center for Fathering Gallup Poll on Fathering, and information on courses and seminars.

Address: http://www.fathers.com

Name: KidPower

Sponsor: FULLPOWER, International

Description: Kid Power is part of FULLPOWER International, which is a nonprofit organization teaching violence deterrence, self-protection, confidence, building skills, and full force self-defense to people of all ages.

Kid Power family workshops are intended for children ages 6-14 and their parents. In addition, Kid Power offers Parent/Child Workshops for children 4-6 years of age. Other workshops offered are: Teen Power (13-18 years of age) and Full Power (Adults). This site provides information on locating a center in the US, Canada New Zealand, the Netherlands, and Switzerland.

Address: http://www.fullpower.org/

Name: Parents of Children with Challenging Behaviors

Sponsor:

Description: Parents of Children with Challenging Behaviors includes parents, guardians, and caretakers who share the experiences of caring for a child with behavioral difficulties. This site offers resources such as a flow chart of Indvidual Educational Plan (IEP) procedures and sample IEPs. Other features include: tips on preparing for IEP meetings, tips on letter writing and documentation, the school chain of command, tips on behavior strategies and programs in school, and a list of books and other resources. Links to other web sites are also provided.

Address: http://www.oz.net/~lingreen/

Name: Facts for Families

Sponsor: American Academy of Child and Adolescent Psychiatry

Description: Facts for Families, published by the American Academy of Child and Adolescent Psychiatry, is published to educate parents and families about psychiatric disorders affecting children and adolescents. Each page contains short, detailed information on such issues as the depressed child, teen suicide, stepfamily problems, and child sexual abuse. The series of 46 documents is available in English and Spanish.

Address: http://www.aacap. org/web/aacap/factsFam/

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Organizations of Interest to Parents

Stepfamily Association of America

Stepfamily Association of America (SAA) is a non-profit educational organization that promotes personal and family support through information, education, and advocacy for stepfamilies. SAA publishes a quarterly newsletter, books and other materials on divorce and stepfamilies written for adults and children in stepfamilies and for professionals.

Contact:

Stepfamily Association of America, Inc.
215 Centennial Mall South, Suite 212
Lincoln, NE 68508
(402) 477-7837

Update: Alliance to End Childhood Lead Poisoning

The Alliance to End Childhood Lead Poisoning has moved. Please contact them at their new address.

Contact:

Alliance to End Childhood Lead Poisoning
227 Massachusetts Avenue NE
Suite 200
Washington, DC 20002
http://www.aeclp.org

Family Voices

Family Voices is a national, grassroots clearinghouse for information and education concerning the health care of children with special health needs. The Clearinghouse consists of collaborative efforts of families, a volunteer Coordinator in all states, 10 Regional Coordinators, and a small staff working in various locations across the country. These people work together to share experiences of families from across the country with the media, policymakers, health professionals, and other families.

Contact:

Family Voices
PO Box 769
Algodones, NM 87001
Phone: 505-867-2368
Fax: 505-867-6517
E-mail: famv01rw@wonder.em.cdc.g ov

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The PARENTING Calendar

CONFERENCE: In the Best Interests of the Child: Parental Access in the Changing Family

Date: October 4-5, 1996

Place: Pine Manor College, Chestnut Hill, Massachusetts

Description: Judith Wallerstein, the founder of the Center for the Family in Transition will be the featured speaker at this conference.

Contact:

M.A.G.A.L.
P. O. Box 331
Dedham, MA 02026
Phone: 617-329-9729

CONFERENCE: The Power Within: Strengthening Our Communities

Date: October 8-11, 1996

Place: New Orleans

Description: This is the 26th annual conference of the National Black Child Development Institute.

Contact:

Vicki Pinkston
1023 15th Street, N. W.
Suite 600
Washington, DC 20005
Phone: 1-202-387-1281

CONFERENCE: Changing Conceptions of Giftedness

Date: October 30-November 3, 1996

Place: Indianapolis Convention Center, Hyatt Regency Hotel/Westin Hotel, Indianapolis, Indiana

Description: This is the 43rd Annual Convention of the National Association for Gifted Children. Classroom teachers, educators, administrators, coordinators, guidance counselors, and parents are invited to attend to focus on topics such as educational reform, computers and technology, advocacy, equity and excellence, psychosocial needs, cognitive thinking skills, standards, authentic assessments, challenging and differentiated core curriculum, creativity, ability grouping, and gifted children in the regular classroom.

Contact:

National Association for Gifted Children
1707 L Street, NW Suite 550
Washington, DC 20036
(202) 785-4268

CONFERENCE: Breaking the IQ Barrier! Emotional & Multiple Intelligences in the Classroom

Date: November 7-8, 1996

Place: Colonial Hilton & Resort, Lynnfield, Massachusetts

Description: Two of the leading experts in the field of psychology and education join forces to present a two-day conference on the changing paradigms of intelligence in our society. Howard Gardner, author of Multiple Intelligences: The Theory in Practice and Daniel Goleman, author of Emotional Intelligence--Why It Can Matter More Than IQ, will present their perspectives on how traditional views of intelligence limit our thinking and lower our expectations of children's true skills and abilities. They will be joined by educators from around the country who are implementing new paradigms of cognitive and emotional development in their schools.

Contact:

Susan Plant, Conference Coordinator
Phone: 1-800-453-7461
Fax: 914-937-9327

CONFERENCE: Pulling Together to Strengthen Families

Date: November 8-9, 1996

Place: Sheraton Baltimore North Towson, MD

Description: The National Exchange Club Foundation for the Prevention of Child Abuse and the National Parent Aide Network announce the Second National Parent Aide Conference. This year's theme is Pulling Together to Strengthen Families, which captures the belief that working together in formal and informal ways will help strengthen families and prevent child abuse and neglect.

This is the second national conference to address the needs of parent aides, home visitors, program managers, and board members who work toward providing services to fragile families in the home.

Contact: The National Parent Aide Network
3050 Central Avenue
Toledo, OH 43606-1700
1-800-760-3413
Fax: 1-419-535-1989
E-mail: nechq@aol.com

CONFERENCE: The Fall Institute: Children and Families First

Date: November 20-22, 1996

Place: The Galt House Hotel Louisville, KY

Description: The purpose of the Fall Institute: Children and Families First is to support and enhance the capacity of participants to provide effective leadership and to reflect the movement of services toward collaborative efforts in building successful partnerships. Registration deadline: October 21, 1996.

Contact:

Western Kentucky University
Department of Continuing Education
2355 Nashville Road

Bowling Green, KY 42101
Phone: 502-745-1908
Fax: 502-745-1911
E-mail: martha.loveless@wku.edu

CONFERENCE: Renewing Our Sense of Community

Date: December 4-7, 1996

Place: Hyatt Regency, Minneapolis, MN

Description: This is the 31st Annual Conference of the National Community Education Association.

Contact:

National Community Education Association
3929 Old Lee Highway, Suite 91-A
Fairfax, VA 22030-2401
Phone: (703) 359-8973
Fax: (703) 359-0972

CONFERENCE: National Head Start Association's 13th Annual Parents Training Conference

Date: December 6-9, 1996

Place: Houston, Texas

Description: Parents of children in Head Start Programs are invited to attend this workshop and conference on concerns of parenting and education such as child growth and development, communication with the young child, health concerns, cultural diversity and ethnic sensitivity in Head Start, computers in the Head Start classroom, and methods for disciplining children.

Contact:

National Head Start Association
1651 Prince Street
Alexandria, VA 22314
Phone: 703-739-0875
Fax: 703-739-0878

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NPIN
National Parent Information Network

Parent News for November 1996

Volume 2, Number 11

With this issue, the NPIN staff is introducing a new format for Parent News. Each month, in addition to our regular summaries of articles and resources, we will be featuring a series of articles on one topic. This series of articles will be written by NPIN staff and will include information from a collection of sources as well as links to other resources. In addition, interviews with experts on the topic will be included when possible. We hope you enjoy this month's feature on work and family!

- What's New on NPIN
- November's Feature:
  Work & Family: How Can Parents Balance the Demands of Both? by Dawn Ramsburg and Anne S. Robertson
  - I. Workplace Policies that Support Families
  - II. How To Win "Family Friendly" Policies at Work
  - III. The 100 Best Companies for Working Mothers
- Community Spotlight:
  Family Centers: Community Concern Put into Positive Action
- Of Interest
  - *Building Resilience: Helping Your Child Cope with Frustrations at School* by Lilian G. Katz
  - *The Parent's Guide: Use TV to Your Child's Advantage* by Dorothy G. Singer, Jerome L. Singer, and Diana Zuckerman (prepared for Parent News by Dawn Ramsburg)
  - *Drug Use Rises for Teenagers* by Anne S. Robertson
  - *Creating a Drug-Free Community* by Anne S. Robertson
  - *Fostering School Success in Adolescents: Girls' Issues/Boys' Issues* by Anne S. Robertson
  - *Staying in School Pays Off* by Anne S. Robertson
  - *Multicultural Parents and Families: How You Can Be Involved in Your Child's Education* by Debbie Reese
  - *PARENTS ASKERIC* by Ron Banks
  - *Is It Juice? Or Is It a Sugar Drink?* by Debbie Reese
- Resources for Parents
  - Guides, Brochures, and Fact Sheets
  - Book Summaries and Reviews
  - Organizations
  - Newsletters/Magazines
  - Web Sites
- The Parenting Calendar

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What's New: Resources added to NPIN during November 1996

The following items have been added to the Resources for Parents / Full Text of Parenting-Related Materials section.

- **Dads and Their Daughters: Father to Father Strategies** A series published by the National Coalition of Girls Schools)
  These texts offer various suggestions on how fathers can become more involved in their daughters' lives and education.

- A Father's Challenge: Reaching Your Daughter at School
- Collaborations: Building Bonds between Fathers and Daughters
- New Roles for Dads: Fathers as Role Models and Mentors

- How Can I Receive Financial Aid for College?
  Describes what types of financial aid are available, how to determine eligibility for aid, how to search for aid, and where to get more information on aid.
- How Can We Help Make Schools Safe for Children?
  Discusses what can be done to ensure children's safety at school, how parents can help children practice safe behavior, and where to get more information about child safety at school.
- How Can We Provide Safe Playgrounds?
  Explains what makes a playground safe, how parents can help children play safely, how unsafe playgrounds can be made safe, and where parents can get more information.
- **Parent Involvement in Education: a Resource for Parents, Educators, and Communities**
  (Series published by the Iowa Department of Education)
  - Chapter 1. The Basics of Parent and Family Involvement
    Discusses the basics of parent and family involvement, the benefits of parent involvement, elements common to successful parent involvement programs, families as systems, the changing American family, and barriers to parent involvement.
  - Chapter 2. Getting Parents' Point of View
    Discusses getting parents' point of view, family strengths, designing programs, assessing parents' needs, and cultural diversity.
- When Families Learn Together
  Explains what family literacy is and and outlines an integrated approach to fostering family literacy.
- Working Parents' Survival Guide
  Lists tips for parents in dealing with children and in taking care of themselves, reasons to feel good about child care, and suggestions for choosing child care.

Reviews or summaries of the following parenting-related books were added to the Parenting Resources: Books section of NPIN:

- *Turning Awareness into Action: What Your Community Can Do about Drug Use in America,* from the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services.
- *Prevention Plus II: Tools for Creating and Sustaining Drug-Free Communities,* from the Office for Substance Abuse Prevention
- *Parent's Guide to Literacy for the 21st Century,* by Janie Hydrick.
- *Beyond Dolls & Guns: 101 Ways To Help Children Avoid Gender Bias,* by Susan H. Crawford.

Information on the following parenting-related newsletters was added to the Parenting Resources: Newsletters section of NPIN:

- *Empowering Families*

Information on the following parenting-related organizations was added to the Resources for Those Who Work with Parents: Organizations section of NPIN:

- 9 to 5, National Association for Working Women
- American Academy of Pediatrics
- Center on School, Family, and Community Partnerships
- Families and Work Institute
- La Leche League International
- National Center for Education in Maternal and Child Health
- National Healthy Mothers, Healthy Babies Coalition
- National Organization of Parents of Blind Children
- North American Council on Adoptable Children
- SEARCH Institute
- Texas Work and Family Clearinghouse
- Wellstart
- Women's Bureau
- Women's Legal Defense Fund

Several new links to Internet resources were added in the Internet Resources for Parents and Those Who Work with Parents section.

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This page updated monthly.
Artwork by Andrea Shields.
Send comments to NPIN Webmaster.

Parent News for November 1996

Special Feature

Work and Family: How Can Parents Balance the Demands of Both? by Dawn Ramsburg and Anne S. Robertson

I. Workplace Policies that Support Families
II. How To Win "Family Friendly" Policies at Work
III. The 100 Best Companies for Working Mothers

How would you answer this question: What is the most important aspect of your life? When men and women are asked this question as part of the General Social Survey conducted annually in the United States, the most popular answer is "my family." The second most popular answer is "my work." Unfortunately, these two most important parts of Americans' lives often pull parents in opposite directions.

Parents are frequently caught in the middle between work and family demands: Your child is sick so you must stay home from work and miss a meeting because you can't find child care and your child needs you the most at this time. Or, your elderly father is in the hospital 100 miles away, so you need time off to be with him. What if your boss says that if you miss any more days from work, you'll lose your current position? Or, what if you don't receive a promotion because your boss thinks you're not committed to your job? Each day, many families face these kinds of "choices" between job security and family responsibility.

Work/family dilemmas usually begin during the late stage of the first pregnancy. While many companies have a maternity leave policy that allows an employee to return to her same position after a 60- to 90-day leave, few employers, if any, compensate women on maternity leave for time lost. Additionally, the family is faced with finding child care for a newborn--not an easy feat. Good child care, for children of any age, may be difficult to find, but for children from birth to two years of age, there are fewer child care providers. Also, a high-quality program for infants and toddlers will maintain a high teacher-student ratio so that they can receive individual attention. The increased expense may be prohibitive for some parents.

Even when parents are able to find good, affordable child care, they may be concerned about the implications of controversial research on the effects of institutional care for children under two. For example, it has been found that for some children who begin full-time child care during their first year, different parents of attachment to their mothers may develop compared to those of children not in full-time care. This finding is open to a wide range of interpretations that need to be investigated further to understand the potential impact on children's long- term development. Nevertheless, for this reason and others, few parents return to work guilt-free, and it is not unusual for a young parent to relinquish a career and financial security to stay home with the baby.

The economic implications of these decisions are compelling. A young family, or a single parent, is faced with the stress of reduced financial resources during a formative stage of family development. When a young parent opts to leave his or her job and stay home to care for the child, the employer is faced with the expense of hiring and retraining a new employee. For some families, having one partner stay home full-time is the best solution, but other families need other options. Increasingly, businesses are recognizing the social and economic benefits of developing alternatives for their employees.

For example, companies like Marriott International, Inc., have found that support for pregnant mothers pays not only in social benefits but also in reduced insurance costs resulting from reduced numbers of high-risk pregnancies. An on-site nurse advises pregnant mothers on health, nutrition, and exercise; and the company's on-site lactation room is available for nursing mothers who have returned to work. Other companies, such as First Chicago NBD and PanEnergy, have similar programs.

In an attempt to reduce parents' struggles among difficult choices, we have compiled information from various sources to help you meet your responsibilities to your job and your family. It is important to keep in mind while reading these articles that this information is aimed at all parents (mothers and fathers.)

The first section provides a general overview of "Family Friendly" policies in the workplace. The next sections provide suggestions on how to win these policies in your work environment, names of companies that are leaders in this area, tips for balancing family life, and additional resources which we hope will be helpful to you and those you work with.

I. Workplace Policies that Support Families

The most common way for businesses to support families is through leave policies, support for dependent care, and flexible work schedules.

Leave Policies

Leave policies are important because they allow time away from work to respond to family needs without a loss in job security. At the same time, companies retain valuable expertise, create more employee loyalty, and save money in training. The most common policies are:

- **Parental Leave.** Provides time off (often unpaid) for the birth of a child and parenting responsibilities; can cover biological, adoption, and/or adoptive families.

- **Family Leave.** Covers parental leave as well as time off to care for other family members (spouse, child, parent, etc.) with a serious illness. (The Family and Medical Leave Act of 1993, which requires businesses with 50 or more employees to provide up to 12 weeks of unpaid leave to employees, provided the first nationwide family leave policy.)

- **Medical or Disability Leave.** Provides time off for an employee who is temporarily disabled and unable to work. (Note: The Pregnancy Discrimination Act of 1978 considers pregnancy a disability; therefore, organizations with 15 or more employees must provide the same leave and benefits to pregnant workers as they would to any other temporarily disabled employee.)

Dependent Care (Child and Elder Care)

Dependent care polices are important because they help to provide support for the employee's extended family. This support may be provided through financial assistance policies, direct services, or information services.

1. Direct Services:

   On-site/Near-site Child Care. Sponsors or subsidizes the cost of child care centers so all employees can afford child care.

   Consortium Child Care Centers. Offers to groups of employers the opportunity to share the costs and benefits of creating a child care center. This option is particularly useful for small businesses.

   Emergency/Sick Care. Provides care for children who are ill or who need temporary care.

   School-age Services. Supports after-school programs and warm-lines (call-in services for older children at home alone), sponsors seminars for children to learn the skills needed to stay home alone, or provides programs for vacations and holidays.

2. Financial Assistance:

Vouchers. Pays part of an employee's child care costs in the form of a flat fee, a percentage of the cost, etc.

Discounts. Negotiates with child care centers for a discount for employees.

Dependent Care Assistance Plans. Allows employees to use pre-tax dollars to cover dependent care expenses.

Long-term Care Insurance. Provides insurance to help employees pay for long-term care for themselves or dependents, spouses, or parents.

Respite Care. Provides full or partial reimbursement of the costs associated with hiring a caregiver so employees who care for elderly relatives can take a brief break from their responsibilities.

3. Information, Training, and Referral:

Child and Elder Care Referral. Provides information on types of care and services available in the community, often as part of national networks. Can provide counseling or written materials to help employees choose among options.

Work-Family Seminars. Conducts on-site seminars on issues related to parenting, balancing work and family, and caring for elderly relatives.

Flexible Schedules

Flexible schedules have become a popular trend in many companies. They help employees balance work and family responsibilities, while allowing employers to meet their business needs. There are many types of flexible schedules, including:

- **Flextime.** Employees set different start and end times to their work day, while working the same number of hours per day or week.
- **Part-time Work.** Employees work fewer hours, with pro-rated pay and benefits, while maintaining the job security of a full-time employee.
- **Flexplace (or "telecommuting").** Employees work off-site, at home or a satellite office, during all or part of their scheduled hours.
- **Job Sharing.** Two or more employees share the responsibilities of a full-time job, with pro-rated salaries and benefits.
- **Compressed Work Weeks.** Employees condense a standard work week into fewer than 5 days.
- **Voluntary Reduced Work Time.** Full-time employees reduce their work hours for a period of time with a corresponding reduction in pay (differs from part-time because of the expectation that the employee will return to full-time work after a limited period of time).

II. How To Win "Family-Friendly" Policies at Work

Is it possible to persuade your company to implement any of these policies? We have compiled some guidelines for ways you can build support for such policies with your employer. Please keep in mind that you may need to adapt this list for your situation.

1. Generate Support: Work collaboratively with other employees so that everyone has an opportunity to express what his or her family needs.

Decide What You Want.
What type of policy are you looking for from your employer? Do you want to gather support for flexible work schedules? Make a list of all things you would like. Be sure to consider immediate needs as well as long-term needs.

Approach Others Who Have Similar Needs and Create a Group.
Talk to people you work with about what you would like to have. Find other people who share your interests and needs and meet with them. Try to approach people at all levels of the company and don't worry if the group is small at first.

Gather Information.
Determine what is happening now in your company--what are its resources? What policies exist at similar companies? Consider doing a survey of employee needs.

Determine Whom To Talk to.
Find out who is responsible for implementing employee policy. Also, find out who can advocate most effectively for your group.

2. Propose Change(s): Develop a team or committee that can follow through on recommendations with the employer.

   List Priorities and the "Bottom Line."
   Look at your list and identify the most important goals. When prioritizing, try to focus on policies that apply to as many workers as possible. Decide what is the "least" you could all be happy with.

   Prepare Your Argument.
   You will want to demonstrate need, the impact of the present situation on the company, and how your policy can benefit the company. Also, show that the employees are committed to winning the change they need. Rehearse your case and prepare responses for all possible questions or reactions.

   Ask for the Changes.
   Arrange a meeting with the people you need to talk to, and present your case.

3. Follow-up: The committee, as well as other interested employees, might collaborate in follow-up activities focussed on communicating effectively that you will continue to work for family-friendly policies.

   Follow-up in Writing.
   Write a letter of thanks after the meeting and use this as an opportunity to repeat your key points. Ask for a response by a certain date.

   Inform the Group.
   Make sure that everyone knows what is going on so that you maintain support among employees.

   Follow Through.
   Do any tasks necessary as quickly as possible. Ask for any resources you need to complete them.

   Celebrate Any Victory.
   Any progress is a victory, **celebrate it** with your group.

III. The 100 Best Companies for Working Mothers

Now that we've examined the characteristics of a family-friendly workplace, it is useful to look at companies that have taken the lead in implementing such policies. *Working Mother* magazine has just released its 11th annual survey on the 100 Best Companies for Working Mothers.

Some interesting findings are:

- an increase in the use of flexible work schedules as well as an increase in the number of companies providing training to managers and employees on how to develop such schedules;
- a growing awareness that child care needs aren't limited to company headquarters as more on-site centers at field locations were opened;
- more new fathers and adoptive parents using paid leave;
- more programs that set specific goals for promotion of women to senior management levels, and the growing number of companies that now evaluate managers on achieving that goal;
- continued support for the American Business Collaboration for Quality Dependent Care, which aims to improve and expand dependent care (elder and child) in their communities.

It is important to keep in mind that making a company family-friendly is useful not only to the employees, but to employers as well. Companies can experience lower turnover and a more productive workforce by providing these policies.

Other interesting highlights from this year's *Working Mother* survey are:

- Nine of 15 companies on the list with fewer than 1,000 employees offer child care services without impacting negatively on the companies' bottom line.
- A frequent objection from employers in terms of child care assistance is that they can't help employees when they are not concentrated at one site. Yet, TIAA-CREF arranged with a national child care chain that specializes in emergency care to provide employees in 4 cities with 10 free days of backup care; Fannie Mae headquarters provides employees on-site emergency care, while workers at other locations are issued vouchers to pay for backup care; and SAS Institute charges workers at headquarters $200 per month for on-site care, while employees at its 29 field offices pay $200 monthly for care, with the SAS Institute paying the difference.
- Most companies in the United States fail to provide employees with adequate time off surrounding the birth of a baby or during illness of family members. However, 23 companies in the *Working Mother* survey provided paid leave to new fathers. In addition, 27 of the companies offered fully paid leaves to adopting parents.
- Twelve companies from the survey offer formal policies that allow employees to reduce their schedules for a period of time so they have more time to spend with their families.

Working Mother magazine also identified the 10 best companies for working mothers, based on criteria that included pay, opportunities to advance, child care, flexibility (in work schedules), and other family-friendly benefits. The top 10 companies were:

1. Barnett Banks
2. Eli Lilly
3. Hewlett-Packard
4. IBM
5. Johnson & Johnson
6. MBNA America Bank
7. Merck
8. NationsBank
9. Patagonia
10. Xerox

(First appeared in *Working Mother* in October 1996. Written by Milton Moskowitz. Reprinted with the permission of *Working Mother* magazine. Copyright 1996 by, *Working Mother* magazine. For more information, visit *Working Mother* website.

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Community Spotlight

Family Centers: Community Concern Put into Positive Action by Anne S. Robertson

It is 9:20 on a typical morning at the Healthy Universal Beginnings (HUB) family center in New Hampshire. Under the guidance of their teachers, 15 preschool children are playing in the two brightly equipped classrooms. Their parents and one grandparent are gathered in the next room to hear a guest speaker. Several months ago, parents had recommended topics and speakers for their morning meetings. Some of their suggestions included positive parenting, special education, home decorating and budgeting, starting a home business, to simply hosting a regular parent support group. This particular morning the subject is nutrition and healthy meals with a guest speaker from the University of New Hampshire Cooperative Extension.

The HUB is one example of community concern put into positive action. Founded over three years ago by people representing a cross-section of the local population, including the hospital, clergy, school district, Head Start, local preschools, and parents, this collaborative group formed a Ready To Learn Task Force and initiated the HUB as a way to support young parents and children within this New Hampshire community. The center has grown from meeting one morning a week with a few mothers and children to its current program with over 100 regular participants weekly. The center is now open four days a week and at least one evening. It has a core administrative staff along with Family Literacy Home Visitors, an Adult Education Specialist, and a Homeless Family Specialist. The center has grown so quickly that it hopes to have a new site by the end of the year in order to accommodate and expand current programming.

Across the country, family resource centers like HUB are springing up in various locations, such as schools, libraries, churches, or recreation centers. When they are developed by local families and professionals and are given enough financial support, they have great flexibility to serve the community, particularly its "high-risk" families. Not only is the family center idea growing, but so is financial support for this concept. The U.S. Department of Education has funding available for projects like family resource centers through its Goals 2000 money and Title 1/Chapter 1. Larger family centers are typically funded by a collage of federal, state, and local agencies.

Increasingly, state agencies are assisting with the coordination and development of local family centers. In Connecticut in 1988, for example, the state legislature allocated money to pilot three Family Resource Centers. By September 1996, the number of centers in Connecticut had increased to at least 28. Combined federal and state funding for these centers has exceeded $2.5 million.

Guiding the movement for Connecticut is a vision of "...strengthening effective management practice and establishing a continuum of child care and support services that children and parents need" (*Family Resource Center*, ND.). This model strives for the following seven components:

1. Full-time preschool child care
2. School-age child care
3. Families in training
4. Adult Education
5. Support and training for family day care providers
6. Positive youth development services
7. Resource and referral services

(*Family Resource Center*, (ND).)

Although each family center has a unique mission that reflects the nature of the community, one goal they have in common is "connection." Successful family centers consistently cross boundaries to serve

individual families and connect them with the greater community. Families that are connected to local support systems are less at risk for many problems, including school failure and abuse.

This connection can be initiated in a large or small way. The Center on School, Family and Community Partnerships has the following recommendations for starting a family center in your school:

- Get parents involved--offer coffee and doughnuts, and welcome younger siblings.
- Get the principal involved--include him/her in all meetings
- Find a space--remember that size is less important than the purpose.
- Make it comfortable--ask for donations of couch, tables, coffee pot.
- Staff the center--recruit a volunteer or pay a parent from the community.
- Don't give up--remember that change takes time.

(Johnson, Vivian.(ND) *Building Community: How to Start a Family Center in Your School* **Family Center Starter Kit**.)

Sources:

Family Resource Center.(ND) Middletown, CT: State Department of Education State Dept. of Education, 25 Industrial Park Road, Middletown, CT 06457.

Johnson, Vivian.(ND)*Building Community: How to Start a Family Center in Your School* **Family Center Starter Kit**. Center on School, Family and Community Partnerships, Johns Hopkins University, 3505 N. Charles St., Baltimore, MD 21218. Telephone: 410-516-8800

For more information on developing a family resource center in your community, you may wish to contact the organizations we've included in the following list of resources.

Kari Sweeney, Program Manager, Connecticut Family Resource Centers, Connecticut State Dept. of Education, 25 Industrial Park Road, Middletown, CT 06457. Telephone: 860-638-4209

Center on School, Family and Community Partnerships, Johns Hopkins University, 3505 N. Charles St., Baltimore, MD 21218. Telephone: 410-516-8800

Healthy Universal Beginnings; Attn: Jean Briggs, Chapter 1 Director, Woodman Park School, Dover NH 03820.

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Of Interest

Building Resilience: Helping Your Child Cope with Frustrations at School

by Lilian G. Katz

Lilian G. Katz--parent of three, grandparent of five, internationally acclaimed child-development expert, and director of the ERIC Clearinghouse on Elementary and Early Childhood Education at the University of Illinois--shares strategies that will help you help your child overcome occasional and, yes inevitable, frustrations, fears, and disappointments at school.

When the Going Gets Tough...

Your children--like mine and all others--are bound to experience frustrations, distress, and setbacks from time to time in their school careers, such as stage fright at presentation time or disappointment over grades. But that doesn't have to mean that as parents we must launch a protest march down the road to the school. When my own children were small, I saw my job as helping them to cope with difficulties, rather than trying to make the school fit them.

I'm glad I decided to do that, because a growing body of literature on resilience and resistance to stress indicates that occasional frustrations can have positive results for kids in the long run. Children who experience no difficulties are as vulnerable later in life as are those who suffer from excessive stress. In other words, the normal ups and downs of life provide children with opportunities to develop immunities, just the way early experience with colds, earaches, and sore throats help build the immune system.

In the case of unhappy experiences in school, you have an important role to play in helping your children develop coping strategies. Here are some dos and don'ts.

Do help your child overcome anxiety by putting a message in his or her "psychological pocket."

One of my sons came home from kindergarten one day early in the school year complaining that during circle time he "felt cold inside." I believed then, and still do, that I knew what he meant. I asked him gently, "What time do you have circle time?" As he couldn't read at the time, he didn't know. I asked him about the morning schedule and deduced that circle time was at about 10:30 A.M. I then said to him, "Tomorrow during circle time, look at the clock. I will also look at the clock at around 10:30, too. Then remember that I'm thinking of you and sending good thoughts your way." When my son was 27 years old and I was teaching in India, he wrote me in a letter, "When I think of you, I feel you right next to me--just the way I did way back in kindergarten!" He never forgot this coping strategy.

Do remind your child of how he or she coped with bad moments in the past.

Does your child get scared or cranky at the prospect of tests, presentations, or new classroom routines? I remember when one of my sons was in first grade, I went to school to pick him up early to take him to the dentist. He already had had a few minor dental problems and, needless to say, was not eager to return for more work. He fussed quite a bit about leaving school. I then said to him, "Remember how nervous you were the last time you went to the dentist?" "Yes, he said, almost tearfully." I continued, "Remember how uncomfortable it was in the dentist's chair?" He

shuddered and said, "Yes." Then I added, "Remember how awful it was with all that stuff in your mouth while the dentist worked on your teeth?" By this time he was clearly distressed and nodded his head in agreement.

Then I said, "Remember how relieved you were and how wonderful you felt when it was all over?" To which he responded with a bright, positive, "Yes." So I said, "It's going to be just like that all over again. You'll feel uncomfortable for a little while, and then it will be all over." Off we went for the unwelcome appointment.

This strategy illustrates several important points.

- It is important not to pretend that an experience will be painless. Be honest with children so that they can trust you.
- By joining with our children to face up to the distressing experience, we encourage them.
- When children learn to use their past experiences to cope with anticipated discomforts, they've gained a strategy they can use throughout life.

Do help your child focus on larger goals.

Almost every child will have a teacher or classmate at some point whom he or she does not like. When such cases arise, you can be most helpful by saying something like: "Sure, I can imagine how unpleasant that must be. But there is no way that every child can like every teacher all the time, the same way that no grown-up can like every person he or she has to work with. Part of life is learning how to keep working at what really matters even if you can't enjoy all those you work with. The important thing for you to keep in mind is what you can learn from your teacher. A teacher doesn't have to be your favorite person for you to learn from him or her.

Do model fairness, communication, and problem solving.

When your child reports feelings of frustration about an incident or procedure at school, listen thoughtfully and probe gently to get the facts. In this way your child knows you care about his or her experience, but at the same time learns about how facts can get distorted under conditions of stress. For example, one of my sons reported with considerable indignation that during his creative writing class he asked the teacher if he could make a quick visit to the library. She replied that his class could only visit the library on Thursdays. "But I might not need the information on Thursday," he complained to me later. "I needed it today."

After offering a moderate dose of sympathy, I pointed out that if he had asked me if he could go to library, I would have said yes without hesitation. "But I know you," I added. I then explained that this teacher works with 150 youngsters per day and cannot know them all well. "How does she know you wouldn't wander off? And she is responsible for you! I'll bet she would really like nothing better than to have you make good use of the library!"

Don't criticize your child's teacher or school in front of your child.

Even young children can pick up on any worry, frustration, or disdain that you may feel. In the case of the youngest children, it is not unusual for them to attribute heroic qualities to their teachers, and overheard criticism may put a child in a bind over divided loyalties. In the case of older children, such criticism may foster rudeness or defiance to their teachers. Besides causing confusion, criticizing schools or teachers in front of children is not conducive to solving the underlying problem.

Don't take your child's word as gospel.

Getting the facts straight can be difficult for children as well as for adults. Whatever school concerns your child reports, listen carefully. Ask for details calmly and nonjudgmentally, and remember not to assume automatically that your child is in command of all the facts. If you simply accept your child's word and then react strongly, you may encourage him or her to

exaggerate events.

Don't tell white lies like "Everything will be fine."

> As the story about my son and the dentist illustrates, it is best to discuss openly with your child that some moments in life can be upsetting--that life is like that--but they pass. If you avoid discussing the downsides of life and try to sweeten distasteful experiences with white lies, you will lose credibility in the eyes of your child, and at the same time miss an opportunity to help him or her building resilience.

From Dr. Katz:

"For more than 35 years, I have been involved in early childhood education. I started out as a participating mother with my own three children in a parent/cooperative nursery school, and after my kids went off to elementary school, I became a teacher at another parent co-op. Ever since then I have been teaching, consulting with teachers of young children across the United States and in many other countries, and keeping current on the latest research on child development. All of this experience has provided opportunities for me to see schooling from the perspective of both a parent and a teacher."

Note: This article appeared in the October 1996 issue of *Instructor* magazine, in "An Instructor Send-Home for Parents," as an Instructor Reproducible, with permission granted to duplicate and distribute to parents.

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Of Interest

The Parent's Guide: Use TV to Your Child's Advantage

This book, by Dorothy G. Singer, Ed.D., Jerome L. Singer, Ph.D., and Diana Zuckerman, Ph.D., and endorsed by Fred Rogers of "Mister Rogers' Neighborhood," includes suggestions parents can use to moderate the television viewing experience in their homes. The book includes general information about television and parent/child activities that will be included in Parent News over the next few months.

Excerpts and summaries of points in **Chapter Four: When You Watch and What You Watch** (see previous issues of Parent News for chapters 1-3) are included in this edition of Parent News.

This chapter begins the "home minicourse," which is intended to help you and your child understand how television works and how it influences your thinking. The activities listed at the end of each chapter require your TV, paper, and a pencil. It is suggested that you become familiar with each chapter before you start to teach your child. Because this material is designed for elementary-aged school children, it may be necessary to put the ideas into your own words, simplify some of the concepts, and choose the appropriate activities for preschool-aged children and adolescents. Please keep in mind that while the exercises focus on television content, the information and activities should stimulate learning and language arts skills (vocabulary building, critical thinking).

Helping Your Child To Watch TV Intelligently

How much television do you and your children watch in a typical week?

- Keep a record of the number of shows viewed each day and how long each family member watches them.

Once you have this information, you can make decisions about the amount of viewing you do (is it too much?; are you viewing programs together?; what kind of programs are you watching?).

If your children are watching a great deal of TV, consider setting some reasonable limits. Determine what other activities your child is involved in? Is your child watching TV alone? Are the programs monitored? Is your child reading less because of watching television? If so, consider suggesting some books that are related to favorite shows.

What You Need To Know

The goal of this chapter is to help children develop an understanding of the different types of programs that are on TV. Children are often unaware that different types of programs exist. However, children do have preferences for particular types of programs.

Types of Programs:

- Adventure Programs: can be realistic or fantasy
- Cartoons: make-believe and animated
- Comedy Programs: characters are realistic
- Education Programs: programs aimed at teaching
- Serials/Soap Operas: dramas of a continuing story
- Sports Programs

- Talk Shows
- Variety Shows: entertainment shows
- News Programs
  - Documentary: news program in detail on one topic
  - Television News Magazine: combination of in-depth coverage and features
  - Special Coverage: one show devoted to current news story

Discussion Ideas:

- Use the list of programs to talk about sample programs for each type.
- Ask your children if they prefer one type to another and why.
- Watch a type of program that your children rarely watch (see if you can interest them in a documentary or educational program).
- Have your children list the programs the family usually watches together and ask them why these programs appeal to the family.
- Encourage older children to read newspapers for a more detailed account of an event. Since television often presents only part of a story, it is important for them to realize that this presents an inaccurate or incomplete account of an event.

Activity 1:

Explain the program categories to your children.

Have your child name one or two programs that belong under the categories listed:

Cartoon
Comedy
Drama
Game Show
Movie
News
Sports
Talk Show
Serial/Soap Opera
Documentary

Try not to expect too much from your child and be sure not to frustrate your child by demanding that he learn more than he is ready to learn.

Activity 2:

Ask older children (grades 5 to 8) to write down a typical day's viewing by listing how many of each type of program they watched. If your child wants, ask her to keep a record for a week and to fill in each category.

Activity 3:

Be a TV detective! Try to find pictures of each type of TV program. Look in the newspaper or a television guide for pictures that match the shows below.

Comedy, Family Drama, Adventure, Variety, News, Sports, Game, Cartoons, Children's Shows with No Commercials

Activity 4:

1. Watch the news with your child. Write down the order of presentation. On another night, watch the news on a different channel. Is the order the same?

2. Compare a news story in your evening newspaper with a story on TV. What items are omitted?
3. Are different kinds of products advertised during network news than on local news? Why?

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Of Interest

Drug Use Rises for Teenagers

by Anne S. Robertson

A recent report released by the Parents' Resource Institute for Drug Education (PRIDE) shows an increase in drug use at the junior and senior high levels, the largest increase since PRIDE'S annual survey began in 1987.

Among twelfth-graders who were surveyed, 40.8 percent indicated that they had tried an illegal drug during the past year. Marijuana showed the highest increase, up from 9.5 percent in 1994-1995 to 13.6 percent in 1995-96 for junior high students, and from 28.2 percent to 34 percent for senior high students. According to the report, all categories of illegal substance abuse showed an increase, including cocaine, uppers, downers, inhalants, and hallucinogens.

This reported increase has occurred despite substance abuse education within school systems and increased warnings from teachers. The sixth- through twelfth-graders who were surveyed indicated that they were more likely to receive warnings about drugs from their teachers (88.9 percent) than from their parents (29.6 percent) or their peers (11.7 percent).

Consequently, teen drug use has become a key campaign issue for this election year. Since the release of the report, Barry McCaffrey, the drug policy director for the White House, has lobbied against House plans to cut federal funding for drug prevention programming. This work, combined with the efforts of other groups, may have influenced the development of a new bill that would increase education funding by $3.5 billion for the new year. This new omnibus bill was passed by Congress and signed by the president on September 30. There are several programs affected by the increase, including the Safe and Drug Free Schools program, which will receive approximately $100 million more than last year.

Of particular concern when developing substance abuse education programs for junior and senior high school students is including parents in that education. The PRIDE survey showed that almost half of parents thought their children would try drugs or presented an indifferent attitude towards drug experimentation. Douglas Hall, PRIDE's executive director, warns, "Our data reveal that seven out of ten parents are essentially sitting on the sidelines as teen drug use spirals out of control" (*Education Daily*, 9/26/96). This new funding should be used to develop collaborative educational efforts within school communities, including parents, teachers, and students in meaningful partnerships to reverse this spiraling trend.

Further information about resources is available at:

- *Growing Up Drug Free*
- *What Works: Schools without Drugs*
- *Turning Awareness into Action: What Your Community Can Do about Drug Use in America*
- *Prevention Plus II: Tools for Creating and Sustaining Drug-Free Communities*
- Website for the *National Clearinghouse for Alcohol & Drug Information*
  URL: http://www.health.org

Sources:

HHS Survey Shows Rising Tide of Youth Drug Use. (1966, August 22). *Education Daily*. Capitol Publications Inc., P.O. Box 1453, Alexandria, VA 22313-2053, p. 5.

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Parent News for November 1996

Of Interest

Creating a Drug-Free Community

by Anne S. Robertson

Research from the SEARCH Institute in Minnesota shows that communities can help reduce the likelihood of adolescents' participating in substance abuse. SEARCH has identified 30 "external and internal assets" that all youth should have. "Internal assets" reflect characteristics like values, good school performance, and friendship skills. Examples of "external assets" might be a positive school social climate, parent communication, and involvement in school activities.

SEARCH has also identified 10 "deficits" that are likely to be found in the lives of youth that may contribute to an interest in drug use. Deficits include being home alone for more than two hours daily, watching TV for more than three hours daily, and being subject to negative peer pressure. When an adolescent has 20 to 30 "assets" and two or fewer "deficits," then he or she is less likely to participate in risky behavior such as substance abuse.

Every community can collaborate to encourage positive youth development. Some of those collaborative activities include:

- Form a permanent youth-development task force;
- Perform a community-wide needs assessment and look at the assets and deficits that the youth in your community face;
- Collaborate with other organizations--don't compete;
- Get children involved in community-wide activities and service;
- Create a positive school climate where students are well-known;
- Educate and provide support for parents;
- Sponsor activities and sports for youth, and encourage full participation;
- Develop a clear, positive youth development policy;

(This list of collaborative activities was developed by Peter Benson in *The Troubled Journey: A Profile of American Youth* 1990. Search Institute, 700 S. Third St. #210, Minneapolis, MN 55415.)

The U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS) suggests a similar approach. A recent DHHS publication, in both English and Spanish, *Turning Awareness into Action*, provides a checklist for a community-wide needs assessment. It recognizes that each community is different and suggests that action plans should be geared toward individual communities. For example, Joan Brann of Oakland, California, was frustrated by the drug problem in her inner-city school. With the help of a local organization, she wrote a proposal to start a parent group mobilization project. She highlighted the special needs of low-income and minority parents. The project became Oakland Parents in Action (OPA), and it sought to involve parents, educators, and community leaders in fighting drug use at all levels. Although the original OPA group has disbanded, the strategies used to mobilize this neighborhood have become a model for many other communities.

Neither the SEARCH Institute nor the U.S. Department of Education expects this process of positive youth development to be easy or to happen quickly. However, in a recent visit to a public high school in Illinois, the difference in staff and student attitudes was refreshing when compared to other high schools in the area. Many of the assets that the SEARCH Institute had noted as essential were present in this school. The school was small, and students were friendly and well-known by the staff. The school environment was pleasant, neat in appearance, and bright. Curriculum offerings were not broad, but

every student was required to participate in physical education or a team sport for four years. Other extracurricular activities were encouraged. Local residents report that if a child is seen misbehaving, his or her parents will know by the time the child gets home. School staff report that substance abuse is a rare occurrence. It appears that this community values its youth and is taking positive action to prevent substance abuse in the local school.

More information about these and other resources that can help your community to take positive action against teen substance abuse is available at:

- Website for the *National Clearinghouse for Alcohol and Drug Information*
  URL: http://www.health.org
- *Growing Up Drug Free*
- *What Works: Schools without Drugs*
- *Turning Awareness into Action: What Your Community Can Do about Drug Use in America*
- *Prevention Plus II: Tools for Creating and Sustaining Drug-Free Communities*

Sources:

Blyth, Dale. (1993). *Healthy Communities, Healthy Youth.* Search Institute, 700 S. Third St. #210, Minneapolis, MN 55415. Telephone: 800-888-7828

Benson, Peter. (1990).*The Troubled Journey: A Profile of American Youth.* Search Institute, 700 S. Third St. #210, Minneapolis, MN 55415. Telephone: 800-888-7828

Kobrin, Melanie & Lane, Amy. (1991).*Turning Awareness into Action: What Your Community Can Do about Drug Use in America.* Office of Substance Abuse Prevention, P.O. Box 2345, Rockville MD 20852. Telephone: 800-729-6686

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Parent News for November 1996

Of Interest

Fostering School Success in Adolescents: Girls' Issues/Boys' Issues

by Anne S. Robertson

A visit to one of New York's newest experiments in education may surprise guests. The school, located in East Harlem, has only female students, dressed in neat uniforms of navy jackets, pleated skirts, and white blouses. The Young Women's Leadership School opened its doors this fall to 50 seventh-grade girls, approximately half of the original applicants. The school expects to expand through high school in future years if it can survive a complaint filed by the New York Civil Liberties Union and the National Organization for Women.

Both organizations point to the school's violation of the 14th amendment, the 1964 Civil Rights Act, and Title IX, all of which pertain to equal education in public schools.

In spite of the controversy surrounding this school, there has been growing interest in the concept of separate sex education during adolescence. The governor of California, Pete Wilson, has budgeted $5 million to fund approximately 20 single-sex schools. In addition, the legislature in California is planning to revise the wording in a Title IX amendment that restricts single-sex classrooms. While few districts may take the plunge of allocating funds for a new school designed solely for one sex, a number of districts are reviewing options for single-sex classes in key academic areas such as math or science.

Separate boys' and girls' schools are not a new idea. The last "all-girls" public school in New York City began to admit boys in 1986 because it feared being sued for civil rights' violations. Other schools, facing similar threats, had already changed similar exclusive policies. The current segregated programming reform is generated in part by recent research on the issues that adolescent girls and boys face in the school environment and their different approaches to learning in academics and with peers.

The data show that boys and girls start their middle school journey, around the ages of 10-14, on fairly equal footing. However, even in good schools and with sensitive teachers, some girls gradually lose ground in self-esteem and core academic areas--a phenomenon called "learned helplessness." Adolescent girls may feel less capable of responding in class or doing well in certain subjects. Some may adopt a compliant, ultra-feminine image in order to fit into perceived cultural expectations and social groups. In turn, their academic abilities may go unnoticed by teachers who are concentrating on more vocal, demanding students. Some girls may begin experiencing "learned helplessness" during their elementary school years.

Similarly, boys in the middle years may take on a more "macho" or masculine persona in order to cope with increasing violence and sexual pressure within the school environment and the greater society. Boys are more likely than girls to be removed from the classroom for disruptive behavior, to be suspended from school, and to fail to graduate. Special education referrals are higher for boys compared to girls by almost four to one. While some boys may be getting the teacher's attention, it is often for the wrong reasons. Academic failure also puts many middle-school boys at risk and becomes part of a vicious cycle--studies show that there is a positive correlation between academic failure and disruptive or violent activity. By their late teens and early twenties, males involved with illegal drugs and related criminal activity outnumber females by almost three to one.

The single-sex school movement represents a response to the frustrations of parents and educators of adolescent children. One mother, Mrs. Lopez, relates her daughter's experience with boys: "They are very aggressive. They would pull her hair and push her. Maybe if she was more extroverted then I

wouldn't have to put her in a girls' school" (*USA Today*, 9/18/96, p. 1D). One father reports his views of his daughter's all-girl school: "I'm relieved there is this opportunity to get this kind of education.... She is writing reams of stuff. She seems self-motivated" (*USA Today*, 9/18/96, p. 2D). The idea of revamping the school to include boys frightens these parents. Instead, they suggest that someone could form an all-boys school. However, Michael Meyers of the New York Civil Rights Coalition calls the idea that boys are disruptive "despicable" and excluding them from a tax-supported school simply because they are boys, "prejudice" (*USA Today*, 9/18/96, p. 2D). By contrast, in Britain, where single-sex schools are more common, parents of boys who opt for a boys' boarding school express concerns that a son needs to be separated from his mother in order to become a man.

The American Association of University Women (AAUW), a leading authority and advocacy organization on gender bias in schools, recognizes the unique problems faced by adolescent girls. However, when the issue of single-sex schools is discussed, AAUW takes a more balanced approach. In a new report titled "Girls in the Middle: Working to Succeed in School," they suggest reform that will improve education for boys and girls, including:

- Breaking schools into smaller units: Strengthen relationships between school staff and individual students so that students can have more personal attention.
- Bolstering school support to include adult mentors: Provide students with more positive adult connections.
- Providing professional development on gender sensitivity: Help teachers make classrooms more equitable and give equal attention to boys and girls.
- Conducting research on gender issues: Examine grades, test scores, and portfolios while looking at differences between boys and girls. Student focus groups can help professionals and parents understand the issues and suggest ways to change.
- Fostering leadership: Teach confrontational students mediation skills and encourage quiet students to participate in student government and other activities.

Using these and other techniques, including helping schools develop policies that make gender issues a priority, educators can improve the current system of co-education for all students.

More information on gender issues in education is available at:

- Website for American Association of University Women and *Girls in the Middle: Working to Succeed in School* URL: http://www.aauw.org/

Sources:

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Of Interest

Staying in School Pays Off

by Anne S. Robertson

A new education report shows that graduates from high school can expect annual earnings about 25 percent higher than high school dropouts. According to the National Center for Education Statistics, the median income for a high school graduate who had not continued to secondary education was $8,943. For a high school drop out, that income fell to $6,778.

In addition, the NCES study found that there were demographic and regional differences in the populations most at risk for school failure. Some of those differences include (Lightfoot-Clark, 1996):

- Hispanics have the lowest high school completion rate, 61.8 percent, compared with 90.7 percent for whites and 83.3 percent for blacks;
- Dropout rates are highest in the West (14.7 percent) and South (13.5 percent) and lowest in the Midwest (7.7 percent) and Northeast (8.6 percent); and
- 4.4 Percent of students from high-income families drop out, compared to 11.3 percent from middle-income families and 21 percent from low-income families.

High school drop-outs are at greater risk of getting pregnant and becoming single parents. Study results showed that more than 60 percent of dropouts had at least one child. Conversely, only 9 percent of high school graduates had children on or before their high school graduation date.

Secretary of Education Richard Riley, concerned by the report, stated that when a student drops out it is a "fateful decision that often limits their opportunities for the rest of their lives" (Lightfoot-Clark, 1996).

More information about issues related to dropping out of school is available at:

- Website for the NCES
  http://www.ed.gov/NCES

Source:

Lightfoot-Clark, Regina. (1996, August 9). NCES Charts Value of Staying in School. *Education Daily* Capitol Publications Inc., P.O. Box 1453, Alexandria, VA 22313-2053, p. 4.

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Parent News for November 1996

Of Interest

Multicultural Parents and Families: How You Can Be Involved in Your Child's Education

by Debbie Reese

Increasingly, teachers are turning to parents to gather information about their children. This information is important to teachers who are trying to design a curriculum that is relevant to the home culture of children in the classroom.

What do teachers learn about dealing with diversity in the classroom?

Recently, Dr. Arlette Willis of the University of Illinois made the following statement to a group of pre-service teachers in an early childhood education course. Dr. Willis was addressing the class about working with children of other cultures, and how they may best enlist the help of parents. She commented to these students, who were learning to be teachers: "You ARE going to make mistakes. A much greater mistake would be to not try at all." The students in the course were days away from beginning their field-based experience of student teaching.

These students, full of energy and enthusiasm for their chosen field, were about to enter classrooms that, in today's society, are increasingly composed of children from diverse ethnic and cultural backgrounds. Broadly stated, classrooms in the United States are becoming more visibly multicultural. Recognizing this, education colleges across the country are trying to provide their students with information that will help them reach out to parents as they develop curriculum that contains accurate and nonstereotypic information that promotes development of positive attitudes (Williams, 1991). Within schools, teachers attend workshops on multicultural education. Some principals (Davis, 1995) suggest teachers make home visits, seeking assistance from parents, and giving credit to the parents when their ideas and suggestions are incorporated in the classroom.

Pre-service and in-service teachers learn that in Asian American and Native American cultures, eye contact is impolite (Leister, 1993), that Hispanic values include a strong emphasis on family loyalty (Griggs & Dunn, 1996), and that African Americans view things in their entirety rather than in isolated parts, and are people rather than object oriented (Hale, 1983).

Along with this general information, pre-service and in-service teachers are also told there is great variation within each cultural group, and that any single generalized statement may or may not apply to the children in his or her classroom. They learn that within these groups, there are many subgroups (e.g., the term Native American represents over 500 different tribes). Thus, many teachers want to incorporate elements of other cultures into their classrooms, but they are afraid of awkwardly stating a request to parents to assist in this endeavor. Many decide to ignore the opportunities of enriching the classroom by not asking at all; others decide not to ask in fear of offending the parent; and still others are willing to take the risk, knowing their students will reap the benefits of their courage.

How can parents help?

As parents, we can reach out to those teachers as they work toward making their classrooms ones in which our children feel that their cultural and/or ethnic identity is valued and affirmed. We must remember that although we regard teachers as experts, they are still learning about diversity. We can help them in that process, because the parent is an important and reliable resource for linguistic and cultural information (Edwards, Fear, & Gallego, 1995).

Your child's teacher may wish to learn about your home culture by asking your child to take photographs of family members to class. Such photos can be the basis for a variation of the show-and-tell activity in which your child will describe the people in the photograph, using the same words and phrases you use within your home. For example, many African Americans use the term "nappy" to describe hair, and Latino/a families often turn to a curandera (folk healer) as well as a Western physician during illness (Leister, 1993). Photos can also convey information about family structures other than the nuclear family, such as extended families common among Native Americans. Across cultures, we capture the special moments that we celebrate with photographs. These photographs can convey a wealth of information about birth rituals, rites of passage, or traditional wedding practices.

You can serve as a resource to the teacher as a classroom guest. Artifacts, books, music, or even home videos you have at home that are specific to your home culture can be taken into the classroom and used as learning tools. Swick, Boutte, and Van Scoy (1994) suggest families create a book with photos, drawings, and writings prepared by family members. Such a book could also be taken into the classroom and used as a learning tool. With your child by your side and as a partner in leading this activity, discuss these items in the context of their use within your home. This activity will work towards breaking down common stereotypes and misconceptions about items that have become associated with specific cultures. You can lead cooking activities, telling the children about the reasons why this particular food is special to your family or culture.

Teachers are encouraged to make classroom readers (similar to basal reading texts) that use children's own words and phrases. The teacher may ask a parent for assistance in preparing such a text (Grant, 1995).

These activities should be followed up with a period in which children can ask questions to clarify their thinking or to gain further information. Some questions may reflect the misconceptions children have learned, and you should be prepared to receive and answer the questions in an honest yet sensitive manner that imparts accurate information.

Parent-teacher conferences offer another opportunity for parents to help teachers deal with diversity in the classroom. During parent-teacher conferences, provide the teacher with information about specific cultural practices in which your child will participate, especially if participation requires an absence from school. The teacher may have a prepared list of questions to ask you about various aspects of family life such as sleep patterns, bedtime routines, toilet training, holidays, or special family events (York, 1995). The teacher may ask you to review a book about your home culture that he/she may want to use with the children. Or, she may ask you about the authenticity and appropriateness of artifacts he/she has collected for use in the classroom. The teacher may ask you to help her develop a lesson on some aspect of your home culture. If you are comfortable with the request, offer your honest feedback.

If your child comes home with materials or information that, from your perspective, are inappropriate or contain factual errors, contact the teacher and discuss specifically what you deem inappropriate. If you can, suggest alternative activities or materials that more accurately represent your culture.

How important is it for parents to be involved?

Recent research indicates that family involvement in your child's education enhances your child's achievement and fosters positive attitudes--resulting in higher graduation rates and higher enrollment rates in post secondary education (Henderson, 1995). Research also indicates that students learn best when the classroom curriculum reflects the history and culture of the students (Hudley & Barnes, 1993). Your child and others in this and future classrooms will benefit from a teacher/parent partnership that has involved fruitful discussion and interaction on multiculturalism in the classroom.

Sources:

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Of Interest

PARENTS ASKERIC

by Ron Banks

Parents AskERIC is a unique electronic reference service offered free of charge to any parent who has access to a personal e-mail account. Parents AskERIC is an expansion of the original AskERIC service, an electronic question-answering service in which educators and students send education-related questions to the AskERIC "e-mailbox" at the ERIC Clearinghouse on Information and Technology (ERIC IT) at Syracruse University. ERIC IT currently responds to about half of these AskERIC questions by conducting searches of the ERIC database and/or by using other reference resources. They send the remaining questions to the various subject-specialty ERIC clearinghouses around the country, as appropriate.

Parents AskERIC was created soon after the original AskERIC program was implemented in 1992. Many questions from parents are routed to staff at the National Parent Information Network (NPIN). NPIN is based at the ERIC Clearinghouse on Elementary and Early Childhood Education. (You are currently visiting the NPIN website.)

What kinds of questions are sent to Parents AskERIC?

Parents today are concerned about a variety of issues and how their children and family life may be affected by these issues. Typical questions we might receive at Parents AskERIC include:

- My daughter was cut from the basketball team at school and is very depressed. Her grades are also slipping. Should we talk to the coach? How can we help her?
- My 11-year-old son has recently become very angry and uncooperative. When I try to talk with him, he storms off and says it is "None of my business!" I know that communication is important, but I don't know how to reach him. Any resources you can provide me would be greatly appreciated.
- My in-laws clearly prefer my youngest daughter. They bring her little gifts and compliment her. My older daughter, who is going through an awkward stage right now, feels so left out. What should I do?
- Our child has been unable to attend school regularly for 6 weeks due to an illness. He is so far behind in his work that we are afraid he will never catch up. He says he will drop out if the school makes him stay back a year. Is there any way we can help him at home?
- How can we help with our child's homework? She constantly forgets to bring it home, and then she gets in trouble at school. When she does remember, I'm not sure what type of help she needs. Any suggestions would be appreciated.
- Our child was in the gifted and talented program in elementary school but has recently started middle school. The teachers have so many students that we are concerned our child will be ignored and suffer academically. What can we do as parents to enhance the learning environment?

What resources are used to respond to a "Parents AskERIC" question?

While there is seldom one "right" answer to a "Parents AskERIC" question, NPIN staff try to assist each parent by providing them with resources and ideas that will help them begin to deal with the issues presented by their unique situation. NPIN staff use a variety of strategies to accomplish this goal, including the following:

- Providing suggestions based upon the professional experience and expertise of parent educators on NPIN staff.
- Sending the full text of one or more relevant ERIC digests on such topics as discipline, helping children with reading, and other topics.
- Synthesizing information from one or more of the parenting resource books available at the National Parent Information Network, or providing a reference list of useful books that deal with issues presented by the question.
- Conducting searches of the ERIC database, and other databases as needed, to provide relevant citations and abstracts from journal articles/documents (directions for obtaining the full text of documents are also always included in each response).
- Suggesting Internet sites on the World Wide Web that might contain useful information pertaining to the situation for the parent, or providing the parent with directions for subscribing to a listserv such as ADD-Parents (a listserv for parents of children with attention deficit disorder).
- Providing the addresses and phone numbers for regional and national organizations that might be able to provide further assistance, such as the National Coalition for Parent Involvement in Education.

After responses are composed, they are sent directly to the e-mail address of the parent who asked the question. Users of Parents AskERIC are encouraged to contact NPIN if they need further clarification or if they have further questions (or if they want to say thanks!).

How can I use Parents AskERIC?

You can send your parenting question to the AskERIC system at the following e-mail address:

askeric@ericir.syr.edu Sometimes parents take several paragraphs to explain their situation and fully describe what sort of assistance they are looking for, but the majority of the questions are presented in a brief sentence or two.

When will I receive a response?

The goal is for all questions to be answered by NPIN staff within two working days of their receipt. However, during high-volume periods (such as October-November), responses may take as long as four or five days. Many Parents AskERIC questions present complicated situations that require a fair amount of effort to prepare a response, but NPIN staff work hard to respond to all questions as soon as possible!

We encourage you to take advantage of this unique electronic service!

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Of Interest

Is It Juice? Or Is It a Sugar Drink?

by Debbie Reese

Parents who wish to provide their children with nutritious drinks often choose fruit juice. However, trying to select among the myriad options can be confusing. Many drinks are cleverly packaged to suggest they are almost all juice, when in fact they contain high levels of sugar.

While producers of these drinks add Vitamin C, potassium (another vital component of juice) is not added. Exotic blends--mango, guava, or peach--may sound healthy, but they do not provide as much Vitamin C or potassium as orange juice. Vitamin C keeps gums, skin, tissue, and bone healthy, while potassium is important for maintaining normal bodily functions.

Janice Stuff, a nutritionist at Baylor College of Medicine in Houston, suggests parents read labels carefully, offering these guidelines:

- Select orange juice over exotic blends. With the highest amounts of Vitamin C and potassium, it sets the standard. The next best choice is grapefruit juice.
- Does the label list more than 22 grams of sugar? This amount of sugar is a good indicator that additional sugar has been added to the juice.
- Do not opt for calcium-fortified juices as a replacement for milk. Milk offers other nutrients in addition to calcium, and not giving your child milk and/or milk products deprives the child of these vital nutrients.
- Limit juice consumption during mealtimes. Children tend to fill up on juice and do not consume other important foods at meals.

Source:

Juicy Tidbits. (1996 October). *Indy's Child* p. 9.

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Resources for Parents

Guides, Brochures, and Fact Sheets

1. **Johnson, Vivian. *Family Center Starter Kit.* Center on School, Family and Community Partnerships, Johns Hopkins University, 3505 N. Charles St., Baltimore, MD 21218. Telephone: 410-516-8800. Cost: $35.00.**

   Based on the experiences of family centers, these resources are designed for parents, educators, and community members who are collaborating to develop a center. The kit includes a Family Center Guidebook, video, and two reports.

2. ***Annotated Bibliography: Research from the Center on Families, Communities, Schools & Children's Learning.* Center on School, Family and Community Partnerships, Johns Hopkins University, 3505 N. Charles St., Baltimore, MD 21218. Telephone: 410-516-8800. Cost $10.00.**

   The Annotated Bibliography provides over 40 summaries of family-, school-, and community-related projects and issues. Some of the topics include Family Education, Family Needs and Infant/Toddler Development, Multicultural Studies of Family Support, School-Home Communication, Family Literacy, School Choice, and Policy.

3. **U.S. Department of Education. *Growing Up Drug Free: A Parent's Guide to Prevention.* National Clearinghouse for Alcohol and Drug Information, P.O. Box 2345, Rockville, MD 20852. Telephone: 800-624-0100. Cost: Free.**

   This 52-page guide discusses the issues related to drug abuse and experimentation and prevention strategies. Topics cover the importance of teaching values, setting and enforcing rules against substance abuse, communicating with your children, and staying informed with the substance abuse issues within your community.

4. **U.S. Department of Education. *What Works: Schools without Drugs.* National Clearinghouse for Alcohol and Drug Information, P.O. Box 2345, Rockville, MD 20852. Telephone: 800-624-0100. Cost: Free.**

   This 86-page book includes the background, descriptions, and effects of certain drug use as well as an action plan for schools and communities for both parents and professionals. The plan for action has suggestions for parents, schools, students, and communities.

5. **Paulu, Nancy. *Helping Your Child with Homework: For Parents of Elementary and Junior High School-Aged Children.* Office of Educational Research and Improvement, U.S. Department of Education. Telephone: 800-424-1616. Cost: Free.**

   A good guide for parents and those who work with parents, this publication takes a step-by-step approach to homework including why teachers assign homework, the right amount of homework, and how parents can help with the process.

6. **National Association for the Education of Young Children. *Top 10 Signs of a Good Kindergarten Classroom.***

   Parents often wonder what to look for in terms of identifying a good kindergarten classroom. This

article, available for viewing at no charge on the NAEYC Web Site, contains that information in an easy-to-read format.

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Resources for Parents

Book Summaries and Reviews

- ***Turning Awareness into Action: What Your Community Can Do about Drug Use in America.*** **U.S. Department of Health and Human Services. Distributed by the National Clearinghouse for Alcohol and Drug Information, P.O. Box 2345, Rockville, MD 20852. Telephone: 800-729-6686. Cost: Free. Also available in Spanish.**

  This small, comprehensive, parent-friendly book contains specific ideas and an assessment checklist to assist in mobilizing community-wide groups to work towards substance abuse prevention. Suggestions include ways to work with recreation groups, health care systems, religious groups, the business community, civic organizations, and the legal system.

- ***Prevention Plus II: Tools for Creating and Sustaining Drug-Free Communities.*** **Office for Substance Abuse Prevention and distributed by the National Clearinghouse for Alcohol and Drug Information, P.O. Box 2345, Rockville, MD 20852. Telephone: 800-729-6686. Cost: Free.**

  This larger manual is designed for use by professionals and others who are interested in ways to organize community action groups for substance abuse prevention. The manual also includes names and addresses of case studies nationwide that have been implemented for substance abuse prevention.

- **Hydrick, Janie.** ***Parent's Guide to Literacy for the 21st Century.*** **National Council of Teachers of English, 1111 W. Kenyon Rd., Urbana, IL 61801-1096.**

  This comprehensive book for parents covers a number of topics reflecting emerging literacy, including the basics, the development of language, reading, writing, and integrating across the various disciplines. There also is a section on family literacy. One very useful aspect of the book are highlighted sections showing what families can do at home to assist their children in each content area.

- **Crawford, Susan H.** ***Beyond Dolls & Guns: 101 Ways To Help Children Avoid Gender Bias.*** **Heinemann, 361 Hanover St., Portsmouth, NH 03801-3912. Cost: $10.95.**

  This solution-based book is designed for parents and those who work with parents to help prevent gender bias towards boys and girls. Crawford uses several techniques, including the "racism test," to assist parents in identifying gender bias in the classroom. The book also suggests activites for parents to reinforce positive attitudes while discussing sexual sterotyping with their children. There are many helpful action tips for educators and parents to encourage children to be more contemplative and effective.

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Resources for Parents

Organizations

**** Work and Family Organizations ****

Texas Work and Family Clearinghouse

The Texas Work and Family Clearinghouse provides information on technical assistance, dependent care, and other employment-related family issues to public and private employers, state agencies, policy makers, and individuals.

The Clearinghouse maintains a resource library of books, newsletters, magazines, videos, brochures, and articles on work and family management; conducts research and collects information for employers on topics such as how to develop on-site dependent care for employees needs; maintains the Dependent Care Information and Referral Database for the state of Texas; and provides contact information on professionals in the work and family field.

Contact:

Texas Work and Family Clearinghouse
3520 Executive Center Dr., Suite 209
Austin, TX 78731-1637
Telephone: 512-502-3779
Fax: 512-502-3777

Families and Work Institute

This national nonprofit research, strategic planning, and consulting organization conducts policy and worksite research on the changing workforce and changing family/personal lives.

The web site includes announcements from the Families and Work Institute; a description of current research projects, including the Fatherhood Project; a publications list with detailed summaries; and links to other work and family sites.

Contact:

Families and Work Institute
330 Seventh Ave.
New York, NY 10001
Telephone: 212-465-2044
Fax: 212-465-8637
http://www.familiesandworkinst.org/

Women's Legal Defense Fund

The fund promotes work and family policies that help women and their families achieve economic security, equal opportunity in the workplace, and access to high-quality health care.

Contact:

Women's Legal Defense Fund
1875 Connecticut Ave., NW
Suite 710
Washington, DC 20009
Telephone: 202-986-2600
Fax: 202-986-2539

Women's Bureau

The Women's Bureau is the only unit of the federal government exclusively concerned with serving and promoting the interests of working women.

The web site features additional information about the Women's Bureau, press releases, a description of programs and activities, fact sheets, publications, and reports.

Contact:

Women's Bureau
U.S. Department of Labor
200 Constitution Ave., NW
Room S-3311
Washington, DC 20210
Telephone: 800-827-5335
http://www.dol.gov/dol/wb/

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9 to 5, National Association for Working Women

A national organization for working women, mobilizing women for improved public and workplace polices. 9 to 5 also has a toll-free hotline to discuss job issues, legal rights, and experiences with trained counselors.

Contact:

9 to 5, National Association for Working Women
614 Superior Ave., NW
Cleveland, OH 44113-1387
Telephone: 216-566-9308 (membership)
Telephone: 800-522-0925 (job problems hotline)

*** *Breastfeeding Policies* ***

American Academy of Pediatrics (AAP)

The American Academy of Pediatrics (AAP) has been a "voice for children" for more than 60 years. With over 50,000 members, AAP is dedicated to the health, safety, and well-being of infants, children, adolescents, and young adults. The academy supports breastfeeding through its employee lactation program, the network of state breast-feeding coordinators, and a variety of national efforts.

The web site offers news from the AAP, information and services for pediatricians and health professionals as well as parents, and links to other sites.

Contact:

American Academy of Pediatrics (AAP)
141 Northwest Point Rd.
PO Box 927
Elk Grove Village, IL 60009-0927
Telephone: 708-981-7933
http://www.aap.org

La Leche League International

An international organization recognized as an authority on breastfeeding, La Leche offers a toll-free help line, professional and lay publications, and mother-to-mother support groups in many communities.

Contact:

La Leche League International
9616 Minneapolis Ave.
Franklin Park, IL 60131
Telephone: 708-455-7730

National Center for Education in Maternal and Child Health

This national resource provides information and educational sources as well as technical assistance to organizations, agencies, and individuals with maternal/child health issues.

Contact:

National Center for Education in Maternal and Child Health
2000 15th St. North
Suite 701
Arlington, VA 22201
Telephone: 703-524-7802

National Healthy Mothers, Healthy Babies Coalition

This national organization seeks to reduce infant mortality and low birth weight by promoting public awareness and education in preventive health habits.

Contact:

National Healthy Mothers, Healthy Babies Coalition
409 12th St. SW
Washington, DC 20024
Telephone: 202-863-2458

Wellstart

This educational organization promotes breast-feeding, including on-site training of health professionals in lactation management, the San Diego Lactation Program, and the Expanded Promotion of Breastfeeding (EPB) Program, which offers technical assistance and support to global breast-feeding

efforts and initiatives.

Contact:

Wellstart
PO Box 87549
San Diego, CA 92138
Telephone: 619-295-5192

EPB Program
3333 K St. NW
Suite 701
Washington, DC 20007
Telephone: 202-298-7979

*** ***Drug Free Communities*** ***

SEARCH Institute

SEARCH Institute is a nonprofit organization dedicated to helping parents, adolescents, schools, youth serving agencies, congregations, and communities work together to promote positive youth development. Their catalogue has a variety of helpful resources.

Contact:

SEARCH Institute
700 S. Third St. #210
Minneapolis, MN 55415
Telephone: 800-888-7828

Center on School, Family and Community Partnerships

Located at Johns Hopkins University, the center is designed to help schools develop and maintain strong school, family, and community partnerships. They maintain a variety of resources, including videos and manuals to assist individual schools and communities.

Contact:

Joyce L. Epstein, Director
Center on School, Family and Community Partnerships
Johns Hopkins University
3505 N. Charles St.
Baltimore, MD 21218
Telephone: 410-516-8800

National Organization of Parents of Blind Children

The National Organization of Parents of Blind Children (NOPBC) is a national membership organization whose purpose is to facilitate the sharing of experience and concerns among parents of blind children and visually impaired children, to provide information and support, and to develop resources for parents and their blind children.

NOPBC conducts seminars and workshops, publishes free and low-cost brochures for children, parents,

and teachers (e.g., "Blindness Isn't a Handicap--It's a Nuisance"; "Independence: To Have and To Hold"; "Love, Dating, and Marriage: Blind Children Grow Up and Become Parents, Too") in print, Braille, cassette, or disc. Membership in NOPBC is $8.00 per year and includes a publication, *Future Reflections*.

Contact:

Mrs. Barbara Cheadle, President
National Organization of Parents of Blind Children
1800 Johnson St.
Baltimore, MD 21230
Telephone: 410-659-9314
Fax: 410-685-5653

North American Council on Adoptable Children

The North American Council on Adoptable Children (NACAC) is a coalition of parent support groups, adoption professionals, and child advocates who believe every child has the right to a permanent family. NACAC advocates for children who need permanent, nurturing, and culturally sensitive families.

In addition to publications on the many aspects of adoption, NACAC publishes a quarterly newsletter *Adoptalk* that is devoted to current issues in adoption, foster care, parenting, and child advocacy. The organization holds the largest annual national conference on adoption issues, conducts research on topics such as fiscal and programmatic analysis of state adoption assistance programs, and provides training to organizations interested in establishing parent support groups.

Contact:

Dorothy Hobbick
970 Raymond Ave.
St. Paul, MN 55114
Telephone: 612-644-3036
Fax: 612-644-9848
E-mail: NACAC@aol.com

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Resources for Parents

Newsletters/Magazines

Empowering Families

Empowering Families is a quarterly publication of the National Association for Family Based Services (NAFBS), a nonprofit organization that promotes culturally appropriate, effective services for families. Individual subscriptions are available for $20 annually.

Contact:

NAFBS Administrative Office
DyAnn Goff, NAFBS Administrative Consultant
1513 Stoney Point Rd. NW
Cedar Rapids, IA 52405
Telephone: 319-396-4829

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Resources for Parents

Web Sites

Name: National Clearinghouse for Alcohol and Drug Information

Sponsor: Center for Substance Abuse Prevention

Description: The National Clearinghouse for Alcohol and Drug Information (NCADI) is the information service of the Center for Substance Abuse Prevention (CSAP), which is one of three centers in the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA) of the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS).

The NCADI is the world's largest resource for current information and materials concerning substance abuse prevention. Services of the NCADI include question answering by information services personnel; distribution of free materials such as fact sheets, brochures, and pamphlets; various materials for parents, teachers, youth, and others; searches from the data alcohol and drug databases maintained at the NCADI; and other announcements. The NCADI Web site features various publications, press releases, research findings and statistics, on-line forums, and a conference calendar.

The CSAP also operates PREVLINE (Prevention Online), a communication system that allows access to prevention information. On the Internet, when users select "NCADI" from the CSAP page, they are actually linked to PREVLINE.

Postal Address:
National Clearinghouse for Alcohol and Drug Information
P.O. Box 2345
Rockville, MD 20852
Telephone: 800-729-6686

Web Addresses:
http://www.health.org (PREVLINE)
http://www.health.org/aboutn.htm (About the NCADI)

Related Addresses:
http://www.samhsa.gov/csap/csap.htm (CSAP)
http://www.samhsa.gov (SAMHSA)
http://www.dhhs.gov (U.S. DHHS)

Name: American Association of University Women (AAUW)

Sponsor: Nonprofit professional/educational organization

Description: The American Association of University Women (AAUW) is a national organization that promotes education and equity for all women and girls. The membership is comprised of three corporations including the association, the AAUW Educational Foundation and the AAUW Legal Advocacy Fund. The AAUW web site features information about AAUW, materials on various issues, research findings, announcement of fellowships, grants, and awards, and other resources.

Postal Address:
American Association of University Women
1111 Sixteenth St. NW

Washington, DC 20036
Telephone: 202-785-7700

Web Address: http://www.aauw.org/

Name: National Library of Education

Sponsor: United States Department of Education

Description: The National Library of Education is the federal government's principal site for information and referrals on education. Its purpose is to ensure the improvement of educational achievement at all levels by becoming a principal center for the collection, preservation, and effective use of research and other information related to education.

The site includes interlibrary loan services, program descriptions, publications, bibliographies (including a family literacy bibliography), and other resources.

Postal Address:
Office of Educational Research and Improvement
Education Department
555 New Jersey Ave. NW
Washington, DC 20208

Web Address: http://www.ed.gov/NLE

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The Parenting Calendar

Call for Papers

CONFERENCE: Families, Technology, and Education Conference

Date: October 30-November 1, 1997

Place: Chicago, IL

Deadline: ABSTRACTS ARE DUE BY MARCH 1, 1997

Description: The ERIC System and the National Parent Information Network are accepting 500-word abstracts of papers to be presented at the Families, Technology, and Education Conference in October, 1997.

Abstracts will be accepted for the following conference strands:

- Using technology to link schools, families, and students
- TV and movies: Mass media effects on children and family life
- The Internet and its influence on family life
- Using technology to monitor children's activities
- Technology and disabilities: Effects on family life and learning
- Equity issues in family access to computer technology

Abstracts (200 words) may also be submitted for poster sessions that highlight particular projects or products related to the topics of the conference.

Abstracts may be submitted by postal mail or electronically to the addresses below.

Contact:

Anne Robertson, Program Chair
National Parent Information Network
ERIC Clearinghouse on Elementary and Early Childhood Education
University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign
Children's Research Center
51 Gerty Drive
Champaign, IL 61820-7469
Telephone: 800-583-4135 or 217-333-1386
Fax: 217-333-3767
E-mail: ericeece@uiuc.edu

CONFERENCE: Breaking the IQ Barrier! Emotional & Multiple Intelligences in the Classroom

Date: November 7-8, 1996

Place: Colonial Hilton & Resort, Lynnfield, MA

Description: Two of the leading experts in the field of psychology and education join forces to present a two-day conference on the changing paradigms of intelligence in our society. Howard Gardner, author of

Multiple Intelligences: The Theory in Practice and Daniel Goleman, author of *Emotional Intelligence--Why It Can Matter More Than IQ*, will present their perspectives on how traditional views of intelligence limit our thinking and lower our expectations of children's true skills and abilities. They will be joined by educators from around the country who are implementing new paradigms of cognitive and emotional development in their schools.

Contact:

Susan Plant, Conference Coordinator
Telephone: 800-453-7461
Fax: 914-937-9327

CONFERENCE: Pulling Together To Strengthen Families

Date: November 8-9, 1996

Place: Sheraton Baltimore North, Towson, MD

Description: The National Exchange Club Foundation for the Prevention of Child Abuse and the National Parent Aide Network announce the Second National Parent Aide Conference. This year's theme is Pulling Together to Strengthen Families, which captures the belief that working together in formal and informal ways will help strengthen families and prevent child abuse and neglect.

This is the second national conference to address the needs of parent aides, home visitors, program managers, and board members who work toward providing services to fragile families in the home.

Contact:

The National Parent Aide Network
3050 Central Ave.
Toledo, OH 43606-1700
Telephone: 800-760-3413
Fax: 419-535-1989
E-mail: nechq@aol.com

CONFERENCE: Children of the INTERNET

Date: November 9, 1996

Place:
The John Marshall Law School
315 S. Plymouth Ct.
Chicago, IL

Description: Children on the INTERNET is a forum for parents and educators to explore the benefits of this new technology and to learn about risks as well, so that they can cooperate with service providers to enjoy the advantages of the Internet while avoiding the negatives. This forum is sponsored by the Center for Information Technology and Privacy Law at John Marshall Law School and the Illinois Privacy Council.

Contact:

Illinois Privacy Council
c/o The John Marshall Law School
315 S. Plymouth Ct.
Chicago, IL 60604
Telephone: 312-987-1419 OR 312-427-9974

E-mail: privacy@jmls.edu
TTY: 312-427-3066

CONFERENCE: The Fall Institute: Children and Families First

Date: November 20-22, 1996

Place: The Galt House Hotel, Louisville, KY

Description: The purpose of the Fall Institute: Children and Families First is to support and enhance the capacity of participants to provide effective leadership and to reflect the movement of services toward collaborative efforts in building successful partnerships. Registration deadline: October 21, 1996.

Contact:

Western Kentucky University
Department of Continuing Education
2355 Nashville Rd.
Bowling Green, KY 42101
Telephone: 502-745-1908
Fax: 502-745-1911
E-mail: martha.loveless@wku.edu

CONFERENCE: Parents as Partners: Developing Leadership Teams To Promote Collaboration with Parents and Families

Date: December 3-6, 1996

Place: Hotel Roanoke, Roanoke, VA

Description: The Institute for Development of Education Activities, Inc., is sponsoring this institute, which calls attention to the need to think of parents and school personnel as partners in the education of children, rather than as a traditional client/service-provider relationship. School districts are invited to send teams of 3-5 people to the institute, where they will learn about how teams can develop powerful collaborations among schools and families through cutting edge practices. Teams should include an administrator, parent, teacher or other staff member, and a school board member or other community representative.

Contact:

Institute for Development of Educational Activities, Inc.
259 Regency Ridge
Dayton, OH 45459
Telephone: 513-434-6969
Fax: 513-434-5203
E-mail: ideadayton@aol.com

CONFERENCE: Renewing Our Sense of Community

Date: December 4-7, 1996

Place: Hyatt Regency, Minneapolis, MN

Description: This is the 31st Annual Conference of the National Community Education Association.

Contact:

National Community Education Association
3929 Old Lee Highway, Suite 91-A
Fairfax, VA 22030-2401
Telephone: 703-359-8973 .
Fax: 703-359-0972

CONFERENCE: National Head Start Association's 13th Annual Parents Training Conference

Date: December 6-9, 1996

Place: Houston, TX

Description: Parents of children in Head Start Programs are invited to attend this workshop and conference on concerns of parenting and education, such as child growth and development, communication with the young child, health concerns, cultural diversity and ethnic sensitivity in Head Start, computers in the Head Start classroom, and methods for disciplining children.

Contact:

National Head Start Association
1651 Prince St.
Alexandria, VA 22314
Telephone: 703-739-0875
Fax: 703-739-0878

CONFERENCE: Character Education Partnership

Date: February 7-8, 1997

Place: San Diego, CA

Description: Annual Forum on Character Education Partnership.

Contact:

809 Franklin St.
Alexandria. VA 22314
Telephone: 703-739-9515

CONFERENCE: Council for Exceptional Children

Date: February 13-15, 1997

Place: San Jose, CA

Description: The Technology Conference of the Technology and Media Division of the Council for Exceptional 0Children.

Contact:

750 Oakland Ave.
Suite 104
Oakland, CA 94611-4401
Telephone: 510-658-0119

CONFERENCE: Learning Disabilities Association of America

Date: February 19-22, 1997

Place: Chicago, IL

Description: International Conference of the Learning Disabilities Association of America

Contact:

4156 Library Rd.
Pittsburgh, PA 15234
Telephone: 412-341-1515

CONFERENCE: Fifth Annual Conference on Parent Education

Date: February 27-March 1, 1997

Place: University of North Texas, Denton, TX

Description: The Fifth Annual Conference on Parent Education is sponsored by the Center for Parent Education at the University of North Texas.

Contact:

Amanda Barksdale at CCECM
PO Box 5344
Denton, TX 76203-0344
Telephone: 817-565-3484
Fax: 817-565-3801
E-mail: barksdal@scs.unt.edu

CONFERENCE: National PTA

Date: March 10-13, 1997

Place: Washington, DC

Description: The Legislative Conference of the National PTA.

Contact:

700 N. Wabash Ave.
Suite 2100
Chicago, IL 60611
Telephone: 312-6670-67820

CONFERENCE: Children's Defense Fund

Date: March 11-15, 1997

Description: The Annual Conference of the Children's Defense Fund.

Contact:

25 E St., NW
Fourth Floor
Washington, DC 20001
Telephone: 202-662-3674

CONFERENCE: National Coalition for Campus Children's Centers (NCCCC)

Date: April 16-19, 1997

Place: Omni-Sheraton Hotel, Washington, DC

Description: The NCCCC conference features daily keynote speakers, tours of campus children's centers, a workshop track for new directors, and a lobby training and lobbying on the hill. A special track for teachers will also be available.

Contact:

Gail Solit
Gallaudet University
Telephone: 202-651-5130
Fax: 202-651-5531
E-mail: gasolit@gallua.gallaudet.edu

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- What's New on NPIN
- December's Feature:
  Parents and Schools: Partners in Student Learning by Nancy Carey and Elizabeth Farris.
  (Summarized for Parent News by Anne S. Robertson)
- Community Spotlight:
  Families Learning Together: The Strength of Family Literacy by Anne S. Robertson
- Of Interest
  - *Family Gatherings* Prepared for Parent News by Anne S. Robertson
  - *New Report on Pregnancy and Childbirth Policy* by Dawn Ramsburg
  - *How Companies Can Support Employees Who Are Breast-feeding* by Dawn Ramsburg
  - *Balancing Family Life with Work* by Dawn Ramsburg
  - *Paying for College: Loans, Grants, Scholarships and Scams* by Debbie Reese
  - *Child Care Workers Have Lowest Incidence of Substance Abuse* by Debbie Reese
  - *Before You Buy That Exotic Pet ...* by Debbie Reese
  - *Multicultural Holidays in the Classroom* by Debbie Reese
  - *The Parent's Guide: Use TV to Your Child's Advantage* by Dawn Ramsburg
  - *A New Alert on Lead in Vinyl Miniblinds* by Anne S. Robertson
- Resources for Parents
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Artwork by Andrea Shields.
Send comments to NPIN Webmaster

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Parent News for December 1996

What's New on NPIN

For a listing and description of items that are new on NPIN over the last three months, see the What's New on NPIN section on the NPIN Home Page.

What's New: Resources added to NPIN during November 1996

The following items have been added to the Resources for Parents / Full Text of Parenting-Related Materials section.

- **Dads and Their Daughters: Father to Father Strategies** A series published by the National Coalition of Girls Schools)
  These texts offer various suggestions on how fathers can become more involved in their daughters' lives and education.
  - A Father's Challenge: Reaching Your Daughter at School
  - Collaborations: Building Bonds between Fathers and Daughters
  - New Roles for Dads: Fathers as Role Models and Mentors
- How Can I Receive Financial Aid for College?
  Describes what types of financial aid are available, how to determine eligibility for aid, how to search for aid, and where to get more information on aid.
- How Can We Help Make Schools Safe for Children?
  Discusses what can be done to ensure children's safety at school, how parents can help children practice safe behavior, and where to get more information about child safety at school.
- How Can We Provide Safe Playgrounds?
  Explains what makes a playground safe, how parents can help children play safely, how unsafe playgrounds can be made safe, and where parents can get more information.
- **Parent Involvement in Education: a Resource for Parents, Educators, and Communities** (Series published by the Iowa Department of Education)
  - Chapter 1. The Basics of Parent and Family Involvement
    Discusses the basics of parent and family involvement, the benefits of parent involvement, elements common to successful parent involvement programs, families as systems, the changing American family, and barriers to parent involvement.
  - Chapter 2. Getting Parents' Point of View
    Discusses getting parents' point of view, family strengths, designing programs, assessing parents' needs, and cultural diversity.
- When Families Learn Together
  Explains what family literacy is and and outlines an integrated approach to fostering family literacy.
- Working Parents' Survival Guide
  Lists tips for parents in dealing with children and in taking care of themselves, reasons to feel good about child care, and suggestions for choosing child care.

Besides these full-text resources, the summaries of parenting-related books listed in last month's Parent News were added to the NPIN Web site, as well as summaries of parenting-related newsletters and descriptions of parenting- related organizations.

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Parent News for December 1996

Special Feature

Parents and Schools: Partners in Student Learning

by Nancy Carey and Elizabeth Farris

Note: We encourage you to read the complete text of this article at the Web site of the National Center for Education Statistics. The text will be available in HTML format in early December, 1996, at the following URL:
http://www.ed.gov/NCES/pubs/96913.html
The text is currently available in PDF format at the following URL:
http://www.ed.gov/NCES/pubs/96913.pdf
In order to read the PDF version, you will need Adobe Acrobat Reader, which can be downloaded from the Adobe Web site.

Summary provided by Anne S. Robertson

The eighth goal of the Goals 2000: Educate America Act requests that schools develop programs which will increase parent involvement. The suggested areas in which programs could be developed include parenting, communication, volunteering, supporting student academics at home, and decision making (National Educational Goals Panel, 1995).

The National Center for Education Statistics (NCES) collected data on related information from 810 public elementary schools in the spring of 1996. This report presents preliminary data on various types of parental involvement activities currently sponsored by public elementary schools. The report also looks at the extent of parental involvement in decision making pertinent to school issues such as parent input through school councils.

The areas surveyed included:

- Parent attendance at "School Sponsored Activities To Inform and Involve Parents" such as a school open house or parent- teacher conference.
- Parent attendance at "School Events" such as sports, science fairs, or other academic demonstrations.
- Parent attendance by "School Characteristics" including the size of the school; geographic location; whether the school was urban, suburban, or rural; the enrollment of minority students; and the percent of students eligible for free and reduced lunch.
- Parent involvement in "School Decision Making" at the school level such as an advisory council or policy council.

Research supports the view of many advocates for family-school partnerships in education. When parents are involved in their child's learning in a variety of ways, the children will likely earn higher grades and test scores, and they will stay in school longer. These issues will be reexamined, following continued efforts to increase parental involvement, in a report scheduled for release at the end of 1996.

Source:

Carey, Nancy, & Farris, Elizabeth. (1996, October). *Parents and schools: Partners in student learning.*

U.S. Department of Education, Office of Educational Research and Improvement, 555 Jersey Ave., NW, Washington, DC 20208-5651.

National Education Goals Panel. (1995). Improving education through family-school-community partnerships. Executive summary to the *1995 National Educational Goals Report*. (Technical Report 96-03). Washington, DC: U.S. Government Printing Office.

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Community Spotlight

Families Learning Together: The Strength of Family Literacy by Anne S. Robertson

"I passed!" Tina said. "My score wasn't as high as I had hoped, but at least I have it." Tina had just passed her General Equivalency Diploma (GED) exam and earned her high school diploma. She had reason to be proud of her accomplishment--Tina had been one of the 90 million American adults who have low literacy skills. For people like Tina, the lack of education makes it difficult to contribute fully to society.

Tina's story is similar to the experience of many other people who did not finish high school as teenagers. Feeling lonely and lost during early adolescence, Tina regularly skipped class by hiding in the bathrooms at her school. Interestingly, her absence was rarely noted by her teachers, so that by her mid-teens, when she should have been in high school, she had stopped attending completely. Ten years later, Tina was working part-time and was also a caring, single mother of a little girl. However, Tina wanted to do something more to improve both her self-esteem and her income earning potential. A new family literacy program in her area helped her realize her goals by providing a home visitor who encouraged and tutored her and who connected her with an adult education program in her area. Passing her GED was a major goal in her family literacy process. Tina now hopes to continue her education next year, when her daughter is in school full-time.

Family literacy is a new approach to this difficult cycle of educational and economic deprivation. Successful programs which break this cycle of poverty are comprehensive, intensive, and flexible enough to meet local and individual needs. They focus on prevention, and they work with children in the context of their families and with families in the context of their communities.

The family literacy philosophy is built upon the idea that parents and children can learn and succeed together. It looks at literacy across generations and works with children and their parents, recognizing the strengths and mutual support that a family can bring to an educational program when parents and children come to the program together.

Family literacy projects typically identify eligible families for the program as having the following characteristics:

- the family has at least one adult with a literacy-related need, such as the lack of a high school diploma, or English as the second language;
- the family has at least one child, whose age ranges from birth to seven years; and
- the family must live within a reasonable distance of the core services being provided through the project.

Eligible families who enter the project commit to participating in an integrated educational approach with four major components. These components are:

- adult education which may range from basic skills to new computer skills required for the workplace;
- early childhood education which provides developmentally appropriate experiences to assist with continuing success in education;
- parent education and support which helps adults become more effective parents; and

- parent-child interaction time which is a specific time when a child and parent learn and play together.

Another building block of the family literacy philosophy is that programmatic decisions are based on the family strengths model (Potts, 1994). This model is based on the following assumptions:

- parents are the first and most important teachers in their child's life;
- families, even those considered "at risk," have strengths and positive coping skills which they can develop;
- families can recover from crisis and adversity; and
- families can address their own needs and growth through improved literacy.

Family literacy projects also have the flexibility to implement these core components and building blocks through a combination of techniques. For example, home visitors, or specially trained educators, visit the home of the family on a weekly basis. The home visitor works to establish trust with a family which may be isolated from the community. Once trust is established, the home visitor assists the family with setting goals for adult education, the child's education, and parenting skills. The home visitor then continues to help the family with achieving those specified goals while connecting the family to the appropriate support systems within their community.

The home visiting model is frequently linked with a successful school-based program such as the Keenan model. This structured approach brings the family to the school building during regular hours, so that parents can attend an adult education class while the child attends a preschool class. Later the parent and child have lunch together and perhaps participate in a nutrition class. Parent and child separate again for afternoon activities, which may include job training or career development activities for the parent and additional preschool activities for the child.

Research on family literacy programs is still in the early stages, but the outcomes are promising. According to the National Center on Family Literacy, a followup study on the Keenan model completed one year after participation showed gains in the following areas (When families learn together, ND, pp. 4-7):

- 90 percent of children were ready for kindergarten;
- 10 percent of the parents had increased their level of employment; and
- 50 percent or more of the adults were involved in continuing education or were employed.

Other gains were reported in children, including a higher motivation for learning, improved classroom behavior, and improved self-confidence. There was also an increase in parental participation.

Karen Mundie from the Greater Pittsburgh Literacy Council is hoping for similar if not greater gains from her family literacy program. Developed in partnership with two existing preschools, the program is located in a public housing community. The preschool staff were trained in the four family literacy components as well as the techniques for home visiting. The program is funded through a capital campaign and foundation grants. Approximately 25 local families participate in the core integrated services.

Karen also points out that they were fortunate in Pittsburgh to have the support of other schools in the community. For example, on Fridays, the parents in their program volunteer at the elementary school, allowing the parents to learn valuable job training skills as well as support their school-aged child. The adults also attend a career exploration program at the local community college which examines various job-related opportunities and the education or experiences the positions required.

A fundamental principle of the Pittsburgh program is found in excellent family literacy programs across the country. In these programs, the educator respects the family, meets the family where they are, and

then lets the family move forward to greater economic independence and family confidence. Through family literacy programs, the cycle of poverty can be broken, one family at a time.

More information about family literacy programs is available from:

The Greater Pittsburgh Literacy Council (GPLC), Executive Director Donald G. Black, or Karen Mundie, 100 Sheridan Sq., Pittsburgh, PA 15206.

National Center for Family Literacy, Waterfront Plaza, Suite 200, 325 W. Main St., Louisville, KY 40202, phone: 502-584-1133.

ERIC/REC and the Family Literacy Center, Indiana University, P.O. Box 5953, Bloomington, IN 47407, phone: 800-925-7853.

Sources:

Goethel, Jan. (1996). *Frontiers in family learning*. National Center for Family Literacy (NCFL), Waterfront Plaza, Suite 200, 325 W. Main St., Louisville, KY 40202-4251.

Potts, Meta W. (1994). *A strengths model for learning in a family literacy program*. National Center for Family Literacy (NCFL), Waterfront Plaza, Suite 200, 325 W. Main St., Louisville, KY 40202-4251.

Schorr, Lisbeth. (1989). *Within our reach: Breaking the cycle of disadvantage*. Bantam, Double Day Dell, 1540 Broadway, New York, NY 10036.

When families learn together. (ND). National Center for Family Literacy (NCFL), Waterfront Plaza, Suite 200, 325 W. Main St., Louisville, KY 40202-4251.

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Parent News for December 1996

Of Interest

Family Gatherings

During the next few months, people around the world will begin planning their holiday festivities. Fall harvest festivals culminate in Thanksgiving in the United States. The winter brings celebrations such as Christmas, Hannukah, Kwanzaa, and New Year's Day.

These festivities give us time to pause from routines and gather with our community of friends and family. We may celebrate our faith, our new hope for the new year, or simply the closure of another year that we survived.

Recently, we asked our PARENTING-L Listserv members how they view these family gatherings and celebrations. The PARENTING-L Listserv is supported by the National Parent Information Network and discusses many issues related to parenting, family life, and education. The members' responses are summarized below.

From Israel, we received the following:

> "At the moment we live in Israel, so family gatherings are kind of hard to get to. When I was a kid, we used to get together with aunts, uncles, cousins, and grandparents for all the Jewish holidays. The activities we planned were based on the holiday itself and its religious traditions. Being in Israel, my kids are learning the traditional aspects of the holidays more in depth than I ever did. However, they do lose out on the family part of it. Whereas most people spend the holidays with their extended family, my kids don't have that opportunity. We have a surrogate family here that we usually spend the holidays with, so hopefully that helps."

Many families are separated by distance but develop methods of getting together. We hear from the United States:

> "We usually have several Christmases, and we're lucky if any of them are on Christmas Day! My parents live 500 miles away, my sister lives 2500 miles away. Usually we trade the drive to visit with my parents over Christmas weekend or New Year's Day. I find that now that I have a child it is more important to me to attend these things and connect with family."

Other families live closer to extended family and will spend one evening at one grandparent's home and the next day at another grandparent's home:

> "We're very lucky to live 20 minutes from one grandmother and 60 minutes from the other, plus two uncles and an aunt. And our kids are the only ones in the area. As a result, we've used family for sitters. I am glad the kids can get close to their extended family. Our holiday foods are traditional. Every New Year's Day we drive 2-1/2 hours to spend the day with my mother's cousin and eat beans to give us luck for the New Year."

From Maine, we hear that one family usually has a white Christmas as well as important traditions:

> "My father plays Santa and passes out the gifts, rotating the recipient. This allows everyone to enjoy the holiday and what we all receive and who gave it...it's not rushed! We are a

Catholic family so we go to mass on Christmas Eve."

Some families have developed a tradition of helping others. For example:

> "During the Christmas season, we collect food for our church food drive, and Matthew picks out 2 toys at the store to give to the local Toys for Tots Program. We have been trying to teach Matthew that we need to help people who aren't as lucky as we are. Also, we are lucky that our parents live 1-1/2 hours from us and my grandparents 2-1/2 hours away, so we can visit fairly frequently."

However, there are times when those family celebrations don't work out exactly as planned. For instance:

> "We have always been the ones who have had to travel to family gatherings because we have lived on a coast (both) and our families are in the Midwest. They have, without exception, been no fun or downright horrible for one reason or another. Perhaps I can pass along some tips for getting through the horribles.

- Prepare yourselves and the children: If Grandma smokes like a chimney, try to see that the children sleep away from her room. If you are expected to take part in activities, inquire about age-appropriate things for the kids, babysitting possibilities, necessary clothes.
- Incorporate some of your nuclear family's traditions into the larger group, e.g., cinnamon rolls for Christmas breakfast.
- Do fun things before and after the trip that are special for your nuclear family. You may also want to take time out for your own family during the trip, just to blow off steam if your relatives are driving you crazy.
- Invite a friend. People are sometimes inhibited from exhibiting their worst holiday grumpiness in the presence of a non-family member.
- Understand why people are behaving like they are.
- Use the opportunity to quiz family members about family history. This always produces fun conversation, and it is really good for the children to hear the stories.
- Have a couple of secret presents packed away, even for yourself.
- Don't overload your luggage with gifts, if you fly. They may get lost or be crushed or stolen. Ship ahead or buy them when you get there."

There may also be some tensions regarding child-rearing issues when families come together. Dr. Lilian Katz (1983) in *Child-Rearing Disagreements* from our Parent Library has some suggestions:

- Exercise restraint so that most of the detailed argument can be played out away from the child.
- Develop a list of the issues which may spark disagreements and set aside time to discuss them.
- Remember, sensitive issues may be associated with painful memories of your childhood.
- Total agreement is not necessary; it is probably helpful for a child to observe how an adult accommodates differences.

In spite of the difficulties, when families or friends can't be together, they are frequently missed. From Canada we hear: "We no longer live close enough to family to visit. However, my family had some traditions that I really enjoyed when I was a child. Every Christmas we would have our presents and our

turkey dinner, then head over to my grandmother's. During the afternoon, all of her children and their families would come to visit. On New Year's Day, every year we would all get together for a huge potluck and family "reunion" of sorts. It was really good. We would play games and get caught up on all of the family news. Easter we would go there too and have an Easter egg hunt. My aunt would hide eggs for each set of nieces and nephews as they arrived. It brings back many pleasant memories. I really REALLY wish I could spend Christmas with my family this year."

We also asked our PARENTING-L Listserv to let us know about some family games which have become a tradition. Here are two:

> "A game that my in-laws play during Christmas time is the dice game. Everybody brings approximately 5 wrapped gifts, most of which is silly stuff they have around the house and never use. All the gifts go in the center of the table, then we take turns rolling the dice. If you get a 7 or 11, you get to pick a gift. After all the gifts have been dispersed, the timer is set for 10 minutes and everybody rolls the dice quickly. If you get a 7 or 11, you are allowed to steal a gift from somebody else. Our family has grown quite a bit over the years, so now we divide the group into adults and children. Some of us will go to the Dollar Store and buy things for the kids and wrap those for the children's dice game. This is a fun game! One of the things that makes the game funny is when someone chooses a gift because of the way it is wrapped! One year my father-in-law "fought" for a gift--it turned out to be a breast-feeding book!"
>
> "We play a game called "Sardines," a reverse hide-and-go-seek. One person hides while everyone else counts. The group then spreads out looking for the missing person. You may not turn on any lights that are not already on. We usually try to leave some lit areas for safety. When you find the person, hide with them. The first person to find the missing family member hides next. It's quite a hoot when you have 20+ people playing. We have played it on a smaller scale in a house too."

Festivals, holidays, and celebrations with our family and friends are part of the valuable tapestry which weaves our traditions, culture, and community. From all the staff at ERIC/EECE and the National Parent Information Network, we wish you the very best during this holiday time.

Prepared for Parent News by Anne S. Robertson

Sources:

Katz, Lilian G. et al. (1983). *Child-rearing disagreements*. Family living: Suggestions for effective parenting. ERIC Clearinghouse on Elementary and Early Childhood Education, University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign, Children's Research Center, 51 Gerty Drive, Champaign, IL 61820-7469

Many thanks to our contributors from the PARENTING-L Listserv:

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Of Interest

New Report on Pregnancy and Childbirth Policy

While many companies may not be as family-friendly as their employees would like them to be, some companies have begun to focus on policies that support women who are pregnant. A recent *USA TODAY* article presented the findings from the report "Business, Babies, and the Bottom Line" (Painter, 1996). This report was released by the Washington Business Group on Health, a nonprofit group which examines health policy for larger businesses.

This group attributes the increased interest in pregnancy and childbirth policies to a younger workforce in which pregnancy and childbirth result in a high proportion of health care costs. Moreover, many of these costs have been found to be associated with preventable complications.

Some of the policies found at corporations across the country include:

- arranging lunch-time or after-work seminars on healthy pregnancy;
- having pregnant employees meet regularly with health plan representatives or company nurses;
- offering incentives to employees for going to prenatal classes and regular doctors' appointments (for example, Hagar Clothing Co. provides a free car seat to women who attend five prenatal classes); and
- arranging for infant vaccinations and for mothers to continue breast-feeding after they return to work (see next article).

Why are these policies useful to employers?

- for every dollar spent on prenatal care, more than $6 can be saved in neonatal intensive care costs;
- neonatal intensive care costs for one child can range from $20,000 to $400,000.

Summarized for Parent News by Dawn Ramsburg

Source:

Painter, Kim. (1996, October 10). Company policy: Healthy pregnancy. *USA TODAY*, p. 8D. [Internet: http://www.usatoday.com/life/health/women/pregnant/lhwpr018.htm])

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Of Interest

How Companies Can Support Employees Who Are Breast-feeding

One issue of increasing importance to employers and employees is the ability to continue breast-feeding upon returning to work. For employers, breast-feeding can have a positive impact on the bottom line by lowering health care costs, enhancing productivity, improving employee satisfaction, reducing turnover, and improving corporate image. In fact, in a two-year study of the potential costs to employers, it was found that 93 percent of formula-fed infants fell ill, while only 59 percent of breast-fed infants became ill during the same time. As a result of fewer illnesses in the infants, there was a lower absenteeism rate for breast-feeding mothers, at a significant savings to employers.

Benefits for employees and their children exist as well from breast-feeding. These benefits include facilitating the mother's postpartum recovery, reducing the incidence of illness in infants, providing the most complete source of nourishment for infants, creating a special bond between mother and infant, enhancing the mother's self-esteem and confidence, and reducing the risk of breast cancer. Nevertheless, although 55 percent of working mothers try breast-feeding, only 24 percent of part-time and 12.5 percent of full-time working mothers actually continue breast-feeding for 5 to 6 months.

Ways To Support Employees

Companies can provide a supportive work environment for breast-feeding mothers by:

- allowing breaks, flexible work hours, and part-time work or job sharing, so that women can pump their milk or breast-feed their children;
- offering breast-feeding mothers a private place that is comfortable and clean so that they can express their milk during work hours (in addition, if companies rent or purchase an electric breastpump, they can reduce the amount of time needed by employees to express their milk); and
- providing a leave policy that enables mothers to establish a breast-feeding routine and milk supply before returning to work.

Other ways that companies can be supportive include:

- providing a small refrigerator for safe storage of breast milk;
- arranging for on-site or near-site child care so that infants can be breast-fed during the day;
- providing information to all employees on the benefits of breast-feeding, on company policies, and on services available to support breast-feeding women;
- creating support groups for working parents;
- educating staff about why breast-feeding employees need support; and
- offering a lactation professional on-site to provide breast-feeding education, counseling, and support during pregnancy, after delivery, and when the mother begins working again.

Summarized for Parent News by Dawn Ramsburg

Source:

Breast-feeding Promotion Committee of Healthy Mothers, Healthy Babies. (ND). *What gives these companies a competitive edge?: Worksite support for breast-feeding employees.* Washington, DC:

Healthy Moms, Healthy Babies.

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Of Interest

Balancing Family Life with Work

Summarized for Parent News by Dawn Ramsburg

While we have focused on the workplace in many recent articles, it is important as well to consider how to balance life at home with your job.

Ease the Transition from Work to Home

- Give yourself a rest period when you come home (even if it's 15 minutes) to mark the end of the work day and the beginning of the family evening; change your clothes to mark this transition; and
- discuss with your spouse how to allow you both time to unwind while giving the children the attention they need (consider taking shifts with the kids).

Determine the "Problem" Times of the Day

If early morning is filled with conflict:

- try to get as much as possible ready the night before (get backpacks together, prepare lunches, lay out clothes);
- have a special calendar for important dates and events (list any requirements along with the activity);
- let kids help select and prepare breakfast; and
- decide on rules (who makes breakfast, can TV be on during breakfast?).

If after work is a problem time:

- plan menus in advance (be sure to include kids in planning);
- prepare meals in advance;
- decide how often to eat out;
- try to have everyone present for part of the meal since this is an important time for the family to communicate with each other;
- try to avoid doing errands after work;
- have a place for everyone to do homework (make sure other family members respect the needs of the child or children doing homework); and
- for after school activities, try to car pool or trade another service in exchange for driving (i.e., making snacks, phone calls).

If bedtime leads to disruption:

- develop clear rules on bedtime in cooperation with children; and
- have consequences for disregarding the bedtime (i.e., getting up repeatedly, continuing to talk).

For single parents:

- develop a support system (relatives, friends, groups);
- arrange a "kiddie exchange" with friends, where you watch someone else's children for awhile in exchange for time off in return (can share tasks like running errands or all contribute to paying for

a baby-sitter for a major outing); and
- gather names of reliable baby-sitters in your neighborhood from local organizations who offer baby-sitting classes and certification.

For all parents:

- make time for yourself. If you keep time for yourself out of each day, you are more likely be a better parent and a better employee.

Source:

Perry-Jenkins, Maureen. (1994). All in a day's work. In C. M. Todd (Ed.), *Child care center connections*, Vol. 3, No. 5 (pp. 4-5). Urbana-Champaign, IL: University of Illinois Cooperative Extension Service. [Internet: http://www.exnet.iastate.edu/Pages/nncc/Prof.Dev/cc35_all.days.work.html])

For more information on work and family issues, refer to:
Working Parents' Survival Guide

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Of Interest

Paying for College: Loans, Grants, Scholarships and Scams

Summarized for Parent news by Debbie Reese

The Student Loan Marketing Association, widely known as Sallie Mae, recently released results of a survey that indicates parents of college-bound students are counting mostly on loans, scholarships, and grants to pay for college rather than savings from personal income. According to survey results, most parents have a fairly good idea of the total costs involved in providing a college education, but they have not been saving enough personal income to help with the costs.

USA Group Loan Services, the nation's largest student loan guarantee agency, reports that the average undergraduate leaves college with $10,000 in debt. The debts are generally owed to different agencies, with different interest rates. The student loan community is pushing for parity in repayment and interest rates, so students borrowing from different agencies can have the same benefits across the board.

Parents looking for ways to finance their children's college education often fall victim to a widespread scam in which they are led to believe claims by companies that say they can guarantee to get their child scholarships or grant money.

The Federal Trade Commission (FTC) has recently begun investigating these companies and has won court orders to temporarily shut down several of them. Through direct mail responses to these fraudulent claims, however, families have lost nearly $10 million in recent years, most of which cannot be recovered.

To prevent other families from falling victims to this scam, the FTC is launching a public awareness campaign called Project ScholarshipScam. Typically, the student and/or family receives a card in the mail indicating they have won a scholarship, or that they can purchase a scholarship list with the guarantee that the student will be able to secure financial assistance. If the student is not able to obtain assistance, the companies promise a refund of the service charge. The company then withdraws charges for their services from checking or credit card accounts. To obtain the refund, students are required to furnish rejection letters from between 40 and 60 organizations issuing scholarships.

Legitimate information on scholarships and other financial assistance for college is generally available at no cost in libraries, college financial aid offices, and online computer services such as the Financial Aid Information site sponsored by the National Association of Student Financial Aid Administrators at http://www.finaid.org/. A different site, with articles for families preparing for college, is called College Solutions. The URL is http://www.finaid.org/.

For more information about the scam referred to above, contact the Federal Trade Commission, P.O. Box 996, Washington, DC 20580. Internet site: http://www.ftc.gov.

The report, "College Bound: Americans' Attitudes about Paying for College" can be obtained free from Sallie Mae, 1050 Thomas Jefferson St. NW, Washington, DC 20007.

Sources:

Parents count on loans, grants to pay for college. (1996, August 30). *Education Daily*, pp. 5-6.

Average debt burden for undergrad students hits $10,000. (1996, August 14). *Education Daily*, p. 5.

Scholarship scams bilk millions out of students.(1996, September). *Education Daily*, pp. 1-3.

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Of Interest

Child Care Workers Have Lowest Incidence of Substance Abuse

Summarized for Parent News by Debbie Reese

The Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration of the U.S. Public Health Service recently conducted a survey of workers between the ages of 18-49 in 40 different occupational categories. A total of 33,505 individuals responded to the survey, of which 327 were child care workers.

Results of the survey indicate that the use of illicit drugs and alcohol is lower among child care workers (including all people working in child care programs, such as administrators, cooks, and secretaries, in addition to teachers) than among other categories of workers.

While the national average of illicit drug use among workers is about 7.25 percent, only 1.3 percent of child care workers report using illicit drugs.

Source:

Substance abuse low among child care staff. (1996, September 20). *Day Care USA*, p. 4.

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Of Interest

Before You Buy That Exotic Pet ...

by Debbie Reese

In some communities, getting a family dog or cat is not as simple as going to the pet store. Many pet stores do not sell dogs and cats because they may come from puppy farms with unreliable documentation of pedigree and because they are often bred and raised under inhumane conditions. Now when a family goes to a pet store, they may find that the store sells only exotic pets such as reptiles, birds, and fish.

Perhaps because of effective marketing, there has been an increase in the number of families who have chosen snakes, turtles, and lizards as household pets. Unfortunately, many parents are unaware of the dangers these exotic pets pose to certain segments of the population.

The Centers for Disease Control (CDC) recommend that pregnant women, young children, and individuals with increased risk of infection due to medical conditions such as HIV/AIDS avoid reptiles. In 1996, several children in Ohio contracted salmonella intestinal infections or meningitis from pet reptiles. The germs can be passed either by direct handling of the pet by the child, or by contact with a child from another family member who has handled a reptile.

Teaching magazines include articles on how teachers in early childhood settings can develop hands-on learning activities using reptiles. However, the Centers for Disease Control strongly recommend that child care centers are no place for reptiles.

The Centers for Disease Control recommend that owners of reptile pets wash their hands after handling the pet or any of its equipment, and that the cages be kept far from the kitchen or from other areas where food is prepared or served.

For families interested in obtaining a dog or cat, these pets are available from the Humane Society or from private breeders.

Sources:

Stick to dogs and cats. (1996, October). Indy's Child, p. 9.

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Of Interest

Multicultural Holidays in the Classroom

by Debbie Reese

Fall is a time of many holiday celebrations. Halloween, Thanksgiving, and Christmas figure prominently in the holidays celebrated in the United States. Many parents can remember celebrating these holidays in elementary school classrooms, perhaps recalling a Halloween parade through the school grounds or a party to exchange gifts at Christmas. In teacher supply stores, holiday items, including bulletin board displays, stickers for rewards, and reproducible workbooks, are a major attraction.

With the growing ethnic and cultural diversity of children in schools, education scholars and teachers are reconsidering the place of holidays in the elementary school curriculum. There is a shift away from focusing solely on Christian holidays and toward providing children with information about holidays of other ethnic and cultural groups. Some parents and educators question whether holidays should be discussed at all in the classroom, suggesting that children get more than enough exposure to holidays outside of the classroom and that time in the classroom can be better spent (Katz, personal communication, 1996).

At the same time, celebrating does not mean teachers and schools advocate any particular occasion, rather, they are trying to provide information about the rich diversity that exists in the United States today.

Many teachers ask parents to come into the classroom and talk with the children about how particular holidays are celebrated in their homes. For example, children may learn about the lighting of the menorah at Hannukah and the December Kwanzaa celebration of the local African-American community.

Parents searching for cross-cultural Christmas books to read to their children may want to follow the recommendations of Gloria Jackson, editor of a newsletter on children's literature:

> "A Tree of Cranes," by Allan Say. A story about a bicultural child living in Japan and how his family observes Christmas.
>
> "The Bells of Christmas," by Virginia Hamilton. An African- American story about Christmas.
>
> "Silver Whistle," by Alice Tompert. A story about how a Mexican child observes Christmas.

Sources:

Byster, Robin. (1996). Pumpkins, turkeys and reindeer: Celebrating holidays in the classroom. *Winnetka Alliance for Early Childhood Newsletter*, 7(4), 3-4. Jackson, Gloria D. (December 91-Spring 93). *Mirror: A Newsletter for K-8 Educators*, n 1-7.

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Of Interest

The Parent's Guide: Use TV to Your Child's Advantage

Summarized for Parent News by Dawn Ramsburg

This book, by Dorothy G. Singer, Ed.D., Jerome L. Singer, Ph.D., and Diana Zuckerman, Ph.D., and endorsed by Fred Rogers of "Mister Rogers' Neighborhood," includes suggestions parents can use to moderate the television-viewing experience in their homes. The book includes general information about television and parent/child activities that will be included in Parent News over the next few months.

Excerpts and Summaries of points in **Chapter Five: How Television Works** (see previous issues for chapters 1-4).

For many children, TV characters seem like real people who magically appear on the screen. Research has found that many young children believe that TV characters actually live in the TV set or travel from the set, through the plug, and into the wall. In addition, while most elementary school children are able to understand more, they probably do not always realize that actors only pretend to be characters and that writers create the programs for them. Thus, the first step in reducing the mystery of television for your child is to teach the basics on how television programs are made and broadcast. When children understand how television works, they can think about what they like or dislike about the program and how they would like to change or improve it.

What You Need to Know

Have you ever been asked by your children how television works? Many parents find this difficult to explain because they do not know themselves. The word television comes from two words, "tele," which is the Greek word for "far away," and "videre," which is Latin for "to see." So, television means "to see far away." But how does this work?

A television camera has a lens that can be pointed at whatever will appear on the screen. The lens focuses the light from the image onto the camera tube, which then changes the picture into an electrical signal. A television set can then change the signal back into a picture. If you look closely at a TV picture, you can see that it is composed of tiny dots.

There are many people involved in making a television program. The *producer* is the person with the program idea who is in charge of getting together the people and materials needed to make the program. The *script writer* writes the dialogue and directions needed to carry out the ideas of the program. The *director* handles many of the decisions which need to be made including choosing actors and helping with the creation of the program.

While it is not necessary for your children to remember these details, they should realize that programs are based on scripts (like plays) which actors learn. They are not spontaneous activities of real people in real situations. In addition, your child should be aware that the houses and locations on the TV are probably not real. There is a *set designer* who draws pictures of places and a person in charge of props who helps make the set look real. It might be useful to look at the credits which run before and after a favorite program so that you can explain that the names are listed to give credit to the people who helped make the program.

Discussion Ideas

- Show your children a picture from a newspaper. Have them use a magnifying glass to find the black and white dots which make it up (or use a comic strip to find color dots).
- Ask them what colors they see. What about when the picture is farther away? Why do shades of gray appear in a picture made up of black and white dots? Do they see any colors that aren't really there?
- Help your children see that the TV picture is also made up of dots.
- Briefly explain the different jobs involved in making a TV program and then watch a program with your children. Ask your children to identify the set, a prop, an actor, or an actress.

Activities

1. Make a list of the writers, producers, or directors of several favorite programs (this information is available in the credits either before or after the program).
2. Imagine you are a script writer and write a new ending (4-8 sentences) for a TV program you watched this week.
3. Imagine you are a producer and write down your idea for a new TV program.
4. Imagine you are a set designer and draw a picture of a set for a TV program classroom scene. What props will you need?
5. Family Activity: Have your family pretend to prepare a short scene for a TV program about a family. Family members can take the job of the producer, script writer, director, set designer, prop person, makeup artist, camera operator, lighting director, and actors. How are things that happen in your family similar to or different from what happens in the families you see on TV?

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Of Interest

A New Alert on Lead in Vinyl Miniblinds

Summarized for Parent News by Anne S. Robertson

Toxic levels of lead may be found in a variety of sources including paint, dust, fumes, garden or playground soil, water, and food. Recently, the U.S. Consumer Product Safety Commission (CPSC) has found that some types of miniblinds can present a hazard to young children. CPSC found that the plastic in the blinds deteriorates over time, and with exposure to sun. The contaminated dust on the blinds can be ingested by young children and could present a lead poisoning hazard. CPSC recommends that imported blinds from China, Taiwan, Mexico, and Indonesia be removed from homes where young children reside.

More information about lead poisoning and prevention is available from:

National Center for Environmental Health (NCEH) Web site. This site contains information on childhood lead poisoning and prevention.
http://www.cdc.gov/nceh/programs/infants/infants.htm#infants

Chadzynski, Lawrence. (1986). *Manual for the identification and abatement of environmental lead hazards*. National Maternal and Child Health Clearinghouse, 2070 Chain Bridge Rd., #450, Vienna, VA 22182.

Source:

Staff. (1996, October). News you can use. Imported vinyl miniblinds can contain lead. *Indy's Child*, p. 8.

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Resources for Parents

Guides, Brochures, and Fact Sheets

1. ***Family Literacy: Changing Lives, Strengthening the Nation, Bookmarks of Success.*** **(ND). National Center for Family Literacy, Waterfront Plaza, Suite 200, 325 W. Main St., Louisville, KY 40202- 4251.**

   Each of these seven easily referenced bookmarks covers a different topic with quick facts related to family literacy on one side and a family literacy success story on the other side. The topics are Family Literacy and School Success, Family Literacy and Parent Involvement, Family Literacy and the Immigrant Population, Family Literacy and Employment, Family Literacy and Self-Sufficiency, Family Literacy and Crime Prevention, and Family Literacy and Health Care.

2. **Goethel, Jan. (1996).** ***Frontiers in Family Learning: a Showcase Of Exemplary Family Literacy Programs.*** **National Center for Family Literacy, Waterfront Plaza, Suite 200, 325 West Main St., Louisville, KY 40202-4251.**

   The manual provides a brief description of family literacy and then begins to describe the qualities of exemplary programs. It also highlights four programs across the country including programs in Eau Claire, Wisconsin; Manhattan/Ogden, Kansas; Webster Groves School District, Missouri; and Oklahoma City, Oklahoma. The manual also provides an additional list of resources for further program development.

3. **Potts, Meta. (1994).** ***A Strengths Model for Learning in a Family Literacy Program.*** **National Center for Family Literacy, Waterfront Plaza, Suite 200, 325 W. Main St., Louisville, KY 40202-4251. ED 347 360**

   After a brief introduction on family literacy, this guide explains the philosophy of the family strengths model and why this model is fundamental to the family literacy approach. It also provides activities designed to incorporate the family strengths approach in teaching activities.

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Book Summaries and Reviews

Ross, Peter A. (1995). *Practical Guide to Discipline and Behavior Management for Teachers and Parents.* Providence, RI: Manisses Communications Group, Inc. Available from: Newsletter Book Services, 919 Duke St., Alexandria, VA 22314 ($34.95, plus shipping and handling). ISBN-1-884937-33-0; 79p.

This guide presents practical advice and strategies for discipline and behavior management, aimed at both parents and teachers. The chapters are (1) "Child Personality Development," including self-esteem and backgrounds of difficult children; (2) "The Challenges of Attention," covering Attention Deficit-Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD); (3) "Disciplining Children"; (4) "Specific Behavior Management Strategies," including token reinforcement, time out, behavior management during outings, and diversion; (5) "Behavior Management with Adolescents: A Matter of Communication"; (6) "Positive Classroom," including "Management Plan--The Ross Method"; and (7) "Violence and Behavior." Contains 33 references.

Walmsley, Sean A.; Walmsley, Bonnie Brown. (1996). *Kindergarten: Ready or Not? A Parent's Guide.* Heinemann, 361 Hanover St., Portsmouth, NH 03801-3912 ($10.95). ISBN-0-435-08860-2; 103p.

Based on the idea that parents need to become informed about the educational practices that affect their children, this book offers a guide to different approaches to kindergarten, expectations for incoming students, and ways to obtain needed information for parents new to the process of schooling. Following an introduction that calls for increased parent involvement in schools, the book contains four chapters: (1) "All Kindergartens Are Not Alike," describing five commonly used approaches to kindergarten; (2) "Kindergarten Issues," discussing issues parents face when their children enter kindergarten; (3) "Doing Your Homework," advising parents about how to find out information before their children enter kindergarten; and (4) "Preparing Your Child for Kindergarten," discussing how to help your child meet school expectations for incoming students. In the conclusion, the book reminds parents how slowly schools change and how adaptable children can be.

Miller, Mary Susan. (1993). *Save Our Schools: 66 Things You Can Do to Improve Your School Without Spending an Extra Penny.* HarperSanFrancisco, 1160 Battery St., San Francisco, CA 94111-1213 ($8). ISBN-0-06-250733-8; 163p. PS 024 595

Arguing that money alone cannot solve all educational problems, this book presents 66 cost-efficient ways to solve some of them. Following an introduction purporting that the real reason for the failure of American schools lies not in the lack of funding but in the inaction of the education community, the book suggests solutions, including ways to enable teachers to do a better job, enrich a watered-down curriculum, challenge quick learners and reinforce slower students, put parents on the teaching team, and get the community involved. The book contains five parts: (1) "What Parents Can Do"; (2) "How You Can Help Students Become Part of the Solution"; (3) "How You Can Strengthen Teaching"; (4) "How You Can Strengthen Administration"; and (5) "How You Can Involve Your Community." Contains a state-by-state list of 72 foundations that contribute financial support annually to education, and a list of 23 national education organizations that offer information and advice.

Driebe, Nicole M.; And Others. (1996). *Barriers to Parent Involvement in Head Start Programs.* Paper presented at the Head Start National Research Conference, Washington, DC, June 20-23, 1996. PS 024 656.

Head Start stresses the partnership between the family and the early childhood program, a relationship that is becoming increasingly important in a society where more women are entering the labor force and the number of children receiving non-familial child care continues to rise. This study sought to answer two questions: (1) Are there parents who are not participating in the parent involvement opportunities provided by Head Start? and (2) What barriers might prevent such parents from becoming involved? The study explored which parents are less involved in the parent involvement opportunities provided by Head Start to determine why this involvement was not taking place. The subjects were 32 parents who were in their first year with the Head Start Program. Subjects were interviewed twice, 6 months apart, to obtain information on barriers to and levels of involvement. Head Start's standard parent involvement form and participant observation were used to document amounts of involvement between interviews. The results indicated that high hours of employment, and the somewhat greater financial resources that accompany employment, may compete with spending time on parent involvement. Changes in household composition accompanying program participation, such as the birth of a baby or a divorce, were also determined to be potential barriers.

Davis, Diane Talley, Comp.; And Others. (1995). *Involving All Families: an Annotated Bibliography of Materials for Families.* South Atlantic Regional Resource Center, Plantation, FL. ED 394 316.

As the numbers of students from linguistically diverse backgrounds increase, state and local education agencies, parent organizations, and other agencies require materials in the students' native languages. This document resulted from a collaborative pilot study conducted by the Regional Resource Centers (RRCs) to investigate the feasibility of developing an annotated bibliography of education materials available in languages other than English. These materials include parent rights information, family involvement handbooks, assessment manuals and instruments, and curriculum and instructional materials. The sections are (1) "Introduction," including background and implications; (2) "Document Profiles," detailing 42 document profiles providing abstracts of materials such as brochures, handbooks, pamphlets, and videos; (3) "Resource Profiles," including two profiles of resources for a culturally sensitive technology training project and for an interpretation and translation service, AT & T s Language Line and RESNA Technology Training Project; (4) "Invitation to Users," containing a document profile and resource profile forms; (5) "Appendix," containing a key to languages illustrated on the back cover; and (6) "Indexes," containing an index to the profiles by language and an index to the profiles by topic. While the majority of materials are available in Spanish, some other represented languages are American Sign Language, Chinese, French, Khmer, Laotian, Portuguese, Russian, and Vietnamese.

Chadzynski, Lawrence, (1986). *Manual for the Identification And Abatement of Environmental Lead Hazards.* National Maternal & Child Health Clearinghouse, 2070 Chain Bridge Rd., #450, Vienna, VA 22182.

One of the most preventable pediatric health problems is lead poisoning. Unfortunately, its eradication is difficult because the cause of the problem is usually rooted in the child's environment. Screening and medical management cannot handle this disease alone. Abatement of environmental hazards must be a part of any prevention program. Mr. Chadzynski, the former director of the Lead Poisoning Control Program in Detroit, presents a thorough discussion of the lead sources in the environment and techniques used for identification and abatement. The document was completed under the sponsorship of the Board of Trustees of the University of Illinois and supported by a grant from the Division of Maternal and Child Health, Health Resources and Services Administation, United States Public Health Service.

Johnson, Sue & Carlson, Julie. (1996). *Grandloving: Making Memories with Your Grandchildren.* Fairview Press, 2450 Riverside Ave. South, Minneapolis, MN 55454. PS 024 604

Today's grandparents are eager to grow closer to their grandchildren, passing on the timeless love of grandparents. Grandloving helps parents enliven their relationships with their grandchildren. The book contains hundreds of inexpensive recipes and ideas of things to do with your grandchildren as well as personal anecdotes from grandparents. The guidebook also includes some gentle child-development tips.

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Resources for Parents

Organizations

New Parents Network

The New Parents Network (NPN) is a nonprofit organization founded in 1988. The NPN provides information through kiosks located in public places to reach individuals who do not have computers with modems in their homes.

The NPN is designed to provide information to new parents and professionals who work with parents through kiosks in maternity wards, county health departments, universities, public schools, libraries, and government agencies. Information available at the kiosks is organized into the following categories: Child Care & Education, Diseases & Disabilities, General Parenting Information, Health & Nutrition, Media & Publications, Pregnancy & Childbirth, Product Recall Information, Safety & Poison Control, and Support Information.

Contact:
New Parents Network
P.O. Box 436
Agoura Hills, CA 91376-0436
Telephone: 818-889-4604v Fax: 818-889-9327
Email: moreinfo@npn.org

National Youth Sports Safety Foundation, Inc.

The National Youth Sports Safety Foundation, Inc., is a nonprofit organization working to promote the safety and well-being of children and adolescents participating in sports. The organizational mission is to reduce the number and severity of injuries youth sustain in sporting activities. It serves as an educational resource for health professionals, program administrators, coaches, parents, and athletes.

In addition to a quarterly newsletter ("Sidelines"), the foundation publishes low-cost fact sheets on topics such as baseball injuries and dental injuries, guidelines for parents of children participating in sports, and other resources.

Contact:
National Youth Sports Safety Foundation, Inc.
10 Meredith Circle
Needham, MA 02192-1946
Telephone: 617-449-2499
Fax: 617-444-3288
Email: NYSSF@aol.com

Attention Deficit Disorders Association--Southern Region

The Attention Deficit Disorders Association--Southern Region (ADDA Southern Region) is an independent, nonprofit organization providing a resource network for parents, educators, and health care professionals in Texas, Louisiana, Arkansas, Oklahoma, and New Mexico.

ADDA (Southern Region) keeps the public informed about ADD/ADHD through a newsletter and referral service, monthly meetings, educational programs, parent and adult support services, and conferences and workshops.

Contact:
Attention Deficit Disorders Association--Southern Region
12345 Jones Rd., Suite 287
Houston, TX 77070
Telephone: 713-955-3720

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Newsletters/Magazines

Today's Father

Published by the National Center for Fathering, a nonprofit organization, this quarterly magazine is targeted at "Men Who Want to be Better Dads." Articles in Volume 4 #2 include "Nurturing Becomes the Man," and the results of a 1996 Gallup poll: "Are Dad's Really Tuned In to Their Children?" To be placed on the mailing list to receive *Today's Father*, contact information is provided below. There is a suggested donation of $15.

Contact:

National Center for Fathering
10200 W. 75th St.
Suite 267
Shawnee Mission, KS 66204
Telephone: 913-384-4661
Fax: 913-384-4665
World Wide Web: http://www.fathers.com

Statewide News: from Parents Anonymous

This newsletter supports Parents Anonymous, which is a nationwide group supporting parents in developing positive parenting strategies. Issued quarterly, the newsletter focuses on different parenting issues including violence prevention and substance abuse. Also included with every issue are positive parenting techniques, individual parenting stories, new resources for parents, and a calendar of statewide events. Although this newsletter is focused on supporting parenting activities in Illinois, there are topics covered which are relevant to all parents. The *Statewide News* is free.

Contact:

Children's Home and Aid Society
125 S. Wacker Dr.
14th Floor
Chicago, IL 60606
Telephone: 312-424-0200

Parents Anonymous National Office
675 Foothill Blvd., Suite 220
Claremont, CA 91711
Telephone: 909-621-6184

Bernard Van Leer Foundation Newsletter

The Bernard van Leer Foundation is an international, philanthropic, and professional organization in The Netherlands. The foundation concentrates its philanthropic efforts on low-cost, community-based projects in early childhood education, supporting families and those children who may be culturally or

socially disadvantaged. Their newsletter covers a variety of topics of international interest, including the effects of violence on children and international examples of programs that support families and communities. Donations are welcome.

Contact:

Bernard van Leer Foundation
PO Box 82334
2508 EH The Hague
The Netherlands
Telephone: 070-351-2040

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NETWorking: Other Gopher and WWW Sites to Visit

Name: Infant and Children Programs of the National Center for Environmental Health

Sponsor: Centers for Disease Control

Description: The National Center for Environmental Health (NCEH) is committed to being a leader in environmental public health, to producing scientific data, and to providing practical and constructive service to the public. NCEH is particularly committed to programs that benefit children and people who are often overlooked by public health (i.e., the elderly and people with disabilities).

This site provides specific information on lead poisoning, birth defects, developmental disabilities, and newborn screenings. Brochures, answers to frequently asked parent questions, tips on prevention, and additional contact information are all available.

Address: http://www.cdc.gov/nceh/programs/infants/infants.htm#infants

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Name: National Educational Service (NES)

Description: The National Educational Service (NES) works with educators and youth professionals to help foster environments in which all children will succeed. To accomplish this, NES provides practitioners, community members, parents, and policymakers with the practical and timely information they need to positively affect the lives of children. The information available on this site includes articles on various hot topics in education and youth-care professions. The *Teaching Kids Responsibility Newsletter* provides tips to parents. Various resources are featured, including handbooks, conferences, and video series. Professional development opportunities are listed, including training and classes. Finally, links to other educational sites are provided.

Address: http://www.nes.org/~nes/

Name: Adoptive Families of America (AFA)

Description: Adoptive Families of America (AFA) is the largest nonprofit organization in the United States bringing together those interested in adoption and resources to support adoptive parents, people interested in adopting, and children without permanent homes. AFA's expertise includes U.S. and foreign adoptions and special needs adoptions. They publish the *Adoptive Family Magazine* and *The Guide to Adoption*, sponsor national conferences, and support 250 local adoptive parent groups across the United States.

This Web site features the Adoptive Families online catalog. Topics in the catalog include: adoption, children, parenting, and multicultural awareness. Ordering information for the *Adoptive Families Magazine* is also provided on the site.

Address: http://www.AdoptiveFam.org

Name: National Network on Disabilities

Sponsor: INDEX Web Hosting Services

Description: The National Network on Disabilities is a nonprofit organization which was established to provide a national voice for parents of children, youth, and adults with special needs. The National

Network on Disabilities shares information and resources in order to promote and support the power of parents to influence and affect policy issues concerning the needs of people with disabilities and their families.

The National Network on Disabilities is currently working on "Justice for All," which is a national campaign consisting of concurrent rallies across the country on October 26, 1996, focusing on issues affecting persons with disabilities. In addition to information on this campaign, this site offers Legislative Updates, the Latest News (articles and announcements), and Links to Other Related Sites.

Related Site: The National Parent Consortium on Maternal and Child Health is dedicated to helping parents find links, networks, resources, and information to help raise children. It is also intended to be a resource for professionals who work with children and families. The National Parent Consortium on Maternal and Child Health is formed through a cooperative agreement between the Maternal and Child Health Bureau of the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services and the National Parent Network on Disabilities.

The goal of the consortium is to enhance communication and information sharing between the Maternal and Child Health Bureau and families with children in order to improve the health status of mothers and children, to improve access of children to the needed health services, and to develop and expand community-based systems of health and health-related services that are family-centered and culturally competent.

Features of this site include Legislative Updates, Links to Related Sites, and Bright Futures (the comprehensive, culturally-competent, family-centered, community-based child health supervision guidelines).

Address: http://www.npnd.org

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The PARENTING Calendar

Call for Papers

CONFERENCE: Families, Technology, and Education Conference

Date: October 30-November 1, 1997

Place: Chicago, Illinois

Deadline: *Abstracts Are Due by March 1, 1997*

Description: The ERIC System and the National Parent Information Network are accepting 500-word abstracts of papers to be presented at the Families, Technology, and Education Conference in October 1997.

Abstracts will be accepted for the following conference strands:

- Using technology to link schools, families, and students
- TV and movies: Mass media effects on children and family life
- The Internet and its influence on family life
- Using technology to monitor children's activities
- Technology and disabilities: Effects on family life and learning
- Equity issues in family access to computer technology

Abstracts (200 words) may also be submitted for poster sessions that highlight particular projects or products related to the topics of the conference.

Abstracts may be submitted by postal mail or electronically to the addresses below.

Contact:
Anne Robertson, Program Chair
National Parent Information Network
ERIC Clearinghouse on Elementary and Early Childhood Education
University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign
Children's Research Center
51 Gerty Drive
Champaign, IL 61820-7469
Telephone: 800-583-4135 or 217-333-1386
Fax: 217-333-3767
Email: ericeece@uiuc.edu

CONFERENCE: Parents as Partners: Developing Leadership Teams To Promote Collaboration with Parents and Families

Date: December 3-6, 1996

Place: Hotel Roanoke, Roanoke, Virginia

Description: The Institute for Development of Education Activities, Inc., is sponsoring this institute which calls attention to the need to think of parents and school personnel as partners in the education of

children, rather than as participants in a traditional client/service-provider relationship. School districts are invited to send teams of 3-5 people to the institute, where they will learn about how teams can develop powerful collaborations among schools and families through cutting-edge practices. Teams should include an administrator, parent, teacher or other staff member, and school board member or other community representative.

Contact:
Institute for Development of Educational Activities, Inc.
259 Regency Ridge
Dayton, OH 45459
Telephone: 513-434-6969
Fax: 513-434-5203
Email: ideadayton@aol.com

CONFERENCE: Renewing Our Sense of Community

Date: December 4-7, 1996

Place: Hyatt Regency, Minneapolis, Minnesota

Description: This conference is the 31st Annual Conference of the National Community Education Association.

Contact:
National Community Education Association
3929 Old Lee Highway, Suite 91-A
Fairfax, VA 22030-2401
Telephone: 703-359-8973
Fax: 703-359-0972

CONFERENCE: The Montessori Adolescent: Unifying the Urban Contribution

Date: December 5-7, 1996

Place: Renaissance Oak Brook Hotel, Chicago, Illinois

Description: Over the past 20 years, various middle school projects have emerged which are ready for research and consolidation. This conference offers an opportunity for practitioners to link theory and practice at the cutting edge of new rural initiatives for Montessori middle school programs which want to incorporate a rural-based experience.

Contact:
North American Montessori Teachers' Association
11424 Bellflower Rd. NE
Cleveland, OH 44106
Telephone: 216-421-1905

CONFERENCE: National Head Start Association's 13th Annual Parents Training Conference

Date: December 6-9, 1996

Place: Houston, Texas

Description: Parents of children in Head Start Programs are invited to attend this workshop and conference on concerns of parenting and education such as child growth and development, communication with the young child, health concerns, cultural diversity and ethnic sensitivity in Head Start, computers in the Head Start classroom, and methods for disciplining children.

Contact:
National Head Start Association
1651 Prince St.
Alexandria, VA 22314
Telephone: 703-739-0875
Fax: 703-739-0878

CONFERENCE: From Disruptor to Achiever

Date: December 6-7, 1996

Place:
The Penn State Scanticon
Conference Center Hotel
University Park, Pennsylvania

Description: From Disruptor to Achiever is a conference for helping all students with behavior and motivation problems, including ADHD, choose success. The conference is intended for teachers and other professionals who deal with students who display disruptive behaviors. The failures of past approaches will be examined along with proposals of new techniques and approaches to managing students with disruptive behaviors.

Contact:
Debbie Noyes, Conference Planner
The Pennsylvania State University
225 Penn State Scanticon
University Park, PA 16802-7002
Telephone: 814-863-5120/800-778-8632
Email: ConferenceInfo1@cde.psu.edu
Internet: http://www.cde.psu.edu/C&I/ToAchiever/

CONFERENCE: Character Education Partnership

Date: February 7-8, 1997

Place: San Diego, California

Description: Annual Forum on Character Education Partnership.

Contact:
809 Franklin St.
Alexandria, VA 22314
Telephone: 703-739-9515

CONFERENCE: Council for Exceptional Children

Date: February 13-15, 1997

Place: San Jose, California

Description: The Technology Conference of the Technology and Media Division of the Council for Exceptional Children.

Contact:
750 Oakland Ave.
Suite 104

Oakland, CA 94611-4401
Telephone: 510-658-0119

CONFERENCE: Learning Disabilities Association of America

Date: February 19-22, 1997

Place: Chicago, Illinois

Description: International Conference of the Learning Disabilities Association of America.

Contact:
4156 Library Rd.
Pittsburgh, PA 15234
Telephone: 412-341-1515

CONFERENCE: Fifth Annual Conference on Parent Education

Date: February 27-March 1, 1997

Place: University of North Texas, Denton, Texas

Description: The Fifth Annual Conference on Parent Education. This conference is sponsored by the Center for Parent Education at the University of North Texas.

Contact:
Amanda Barksdale at CCECM
PO Box 5344
Denton, TX 76203-0344
Telephone: 817-565-3484
Fax: 817-565-3801
Email: barksdal@scs.unt.edu

CONFERENCE: National PTA

Date: March 10-13, 1997

Place: Washington, DC

Description: The Legislative Conference of the National PTA.

Contact:
700 N. Wabash Ave.
Suite 2100
Chicago, IL 60611
Telephone: 312-6670-6782

CONFERENCE: Children's Defense Fund

Date: March 11-15, 1997

Description: The Annual Conference of the Children's DefenseFund.

Contact:
25 E St. NW
Fourth Floor
Washington, DC 20001

Telephone: 202-662-3674

CONFERENCE: National Coalition for Campus Children's Centers (NCCCC)

Date: April 16-19, 1997

Place: Omni-Sheraton Hotel, Washington, DC

Description: The NCCCC conference features daily keynote speakers, tours of campus children's centers, a workshop strand for new directors, and training for people interested in lobbying for change in Washington, DC. A special track for teachers will also be available.

Contact:
Gail Solit
Gallaudet University
Telephone: 202-651-5130
Fax: 202-651-5531
Email: gasolit@gallua.gallaudet.edu

CONFERENCE: Building Child and Family Friendly Communities

Date: May 18-20, 1997

Place: Sheraton Biscayne Bay Hotel, Miami, Florida

Description: Building Child and Family Friendly Communities is intended to provide a forum on best appropriate practices and services for all children and families; to build communities that value and support the diversity of families and caregivers in the nurturing of young children; to present innovation, leadership, and effective collaboration in working with and on behalf of children and families; and to showcase the most effective and highest quality services and programs for children and families.

Contact:
Luis Hernandez
Telephone: 305-375-4670

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